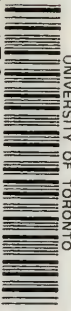


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THE

STRANGE ADVENTURES

OF A

PHAETON.

A Novel.

By WILLIAM BLACK,

AUTHOR OF

“LOVE OR MARRIAGE?” “IN SILK ATTIRE,” “THE MONARCH OF MINCING-LANE,”
“KILMENY,” &c.



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STRANGE ADVENTURES OF A PHAETON.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

OUR BELL.

Oh, the oak, and the ash, and the bonny ivy tree,
They grow so green in the North Countrie!

IT was all settled one evening in the deep winter-time. Outside, a sharp east wind was whistling round the solitudes of Box Hill; the Mole, at the foot of our garden, as it stole stealthily through the darkness, crackled the flakes of ice that lay along its level banks; and away on Mickleham Downs, and on the farther uplands that lay toward the sea, the cold stars were shining down on a thin coating of snow.

In-doors there was another story to tell; for the mistress of the house—Queen Titania, as we call her—a small person, with a calm, handsome, pale face, an abundance of dark hair, big eyes that are somewhat cold and critical in look, and a certain magnificence of manner which makes you fancy her rather a tall and stately woman—has a trick of so filling her drawing-room with dexterous traceries of grass and ferns, with plentiful flowers of her own rearing, and with a crowded glare of light, that, amid the general warmth, and glow, and perfume, and variety of brilliant colors, you would almost forget that the winter is chill and desolate and dark.

Then Bell, our guest and companion for many a year, lends herself to the deception; for the young woman, though there were a dozen inches of snow on the meadows, would come down to dinner in a dress of blue, with touches of white gossamer and fur about the tight waist and neck—with a white rose and a bunch of forget-me-nots as blue as her eyes twisted into the soft masses of her light-brown hair, and with a certain gay and careless demeanor, meant to let us know that she, having been born and bred a farmer's daughter in the

North Country, has a splendid contempt for the mild rigors of our southern winter.

But on this particular evening, Bell—our Bell, our Bonny Bell, our Lady Bell, as she is variously called when she provokes people into giving her pet names—had been sitting for a long time with an open book on her knee; and as this volume was all about the English lakes, and gave pictures of them, and placed here and there little tail-pieces of ferns and blossoms, she may have been driven to contrast the visions thus conjured up with the realities suggested by the fierce gusts of wind that were blowing coldly through the box trees outside. All at once she placed the volume gently on the white hearth-rug, and said, with a strange wistfulness shining in the deeps of her blue eyes, "Tita, why don't you make us talk about the summer, and drown the noise of that dreadful wind? Why don't we conspire to cheat the winter and make believe it is summer again? Doesn't it seem to be years and years ago since we had the long, light evenings, the walks between the hedge-rows, the waiting for the moon up on the crest of the hill, and then the quiet stroll downward into the valley and home again, with the wild roses and the meadow-sweet and the evening campions filling the warm, sweet night air. Come, let us sit close together and make it summer! See, Tita!—it is a bright forenoon—you can nearly catch a glimpse of the Downs above Brighton—and we are going to shut up the house and go away anywhere for a whole month. Round comes that dear old mail-phaeton, and my pair of bonny bays are whinnying for a bit of sugar. Papa is sulky—"

"As usual," remarks my lady Tita, without lifting her eyes from the carpet.

"—For though an improvised imperial has been slung on, there is scarcely

enough room for the heaps of our luggage, and, like every man, he has a selfish hatred of bonnet-boxes. Then you take your seat, my dear, looking like an empress in a gray traveling dress; and papa—after pretending to have inspected all the harness—takes the reins: I pop in behind, for the hood, when it is turned down, makes such a pleasant cushion for your arms, and you can stick your sketch-book into it, and a row of apples and anything else; and Sandy touches his forelock and Kate bobs a curtsey, and away and away we go! How sweet and fresh the air is, Tita! and don't you smell the honey-suckle in the hedge? Why, here we are at Dorking! Papa pulls up to grumble about the last beer that was sent; and then Castor and Pollux toss up their heads again, and on we go to Guildford, and to Reading, and to Oxford. And all through England we go, using sometimes the old coaching-roads, and sometimes the by-roads, stopping at the curious little inns, and chatting to the old country folks, and singing ballads of an evening as we sit upon the hillsides and watch the partridges dusting themselves below us in the road; and then on and on again. Is that the sea, Tita? Look at the long stretch of Morecambe Bay and the yellow sands, and the steamers at the horizon! But all at once we dive into the hills again, and we come to the old familiar places by Applethwaite and Ambleside, and then some evening—some evening, Tita—we come in sight of Grasmere, and then—and then—”

“Why, Bell, Bell! what is the matter with you?” cries the other; and the next minute her arms are round the light-brown head, crushing its white rose and its blue forget-me-nots.

“If you two young fools,” it is remarked, “would seriously settle where we are to go next summer, you would be better employed than in rubbing your heads together like a couple of young calves.”

“Settle!” says my lady Tita, with the least touch of insolence in her tone: “we know who is allowed to settle things in this house. If we were to settle anything, some wonderful discovery would

be made about the horses' feet, or the wheels of that valuable phaeton, which is about as old as the owner of it—”

“The wife who mocks at her husband's gray hairs,” I remark calmly, “knowing the share she has had in producing them—”

Here our Bonny Bell interfered, and a truce was concluded. The armistice was devoted to a consideration of Bell's project, which, at length, it was resolved to adopt. Why, after going year after year round the southern counties in that big, old-fashioned phaeton, which had become as a house to us, should we not strike fairly northward? These circles round the south would resemble the swinging of a stone in the sling before it is projected; and, once we were started on this straight path, who could tell how far we might not go?

“Then,” said I—for our thoughts at this time were often directed to the great masses of men who were marching through the wet valleys of France or keeping guard amid cold and fog in the trenches around Paris—“suppose that by July next the war may be over, young Von Rosen says he means to pay us a visit and have a look at England. Why should not he join our party and become a companion for Bell?”

I had inadvertently probed a hornet's nest. The women of our household were at that time bitter against the Germans, and but half an hour before Bell herself had been eloquently denouncing the doings of the Prussians. Had they not in secrecy been preparing to steal back Alsace and Lorraine? had they not taken advantage of the time when the good and gentle France was averse from war to provoke a quarrel? had not the king openly insulted the French ambassador in the promenade at Ems? and had not their hordes of men swarmed into the quiet villages, slaying and destroying, robbing the poor and aged, and winning battles by mere force of numbers? Besides, the suggestion that this young lieutenant of cavalry might be a companion for Bell appeared to be an intentional injury done to a certain amiable young gentleman, of no par-

ticular prospects, living in the Temple; and so Bell forthwith declared her detestation not only of the German officers, but of officers in the abstract.

"I hate those tall men," she said in her impulsive fashion, although there was always a smile lurking about the blue eyes even when she showed herself most vehement, "with their legs like hop-poles, their heads smooth and round like turnips, their whitish-yellow hair cropped and shining above a red neck, their eyes green and starting out like two gooseberries. And even worse is the short and fat officer—all neck and stomach, like a flying duck—with his feet turned out like the two steps of a dog-cart—with a fierce array of gray hair and moustache, like a terrier looking at a cat—"

"Bell, Bell, will you cease those perpetual farmyard metaphors of yours? You know that Von Rosen is like none of these things."

"I can remember him at Bonn only as a very rude and greedy boy, who showed a great row of white teeth when he laughed, and made bad jokes about my mistakes in German. And I know what he is now—a tall fellow with a stiff neck, a brown face, perhaps a beard, a clanking sword, and the air of a swash-buckler, as he stalks into an inn and bawls out, '*Kellnare! eene Pulle Sect! und sagen Sie mal, was haben Sie für Zeitungen—die Alljemeene?*'"

Ordinarily, our Bell's face was as fair and smooth and placid as a cornfield in sunshine, but sometimes, you know, the cornfield is swept by a gust of wind, and then it lays bare the blood-red poppies beneath. She was now in a pretty turmoil of half-affected anger, and Queen Titania merely looked on with a cold, indulgent smile. I ventured to point out to Bell that she might alter her opinion when Von Rosen actually came over with all the glamour of a hero about him, and that, indeed, she could not do better than marry him.

Bell opened her eyes: "Marry him because he is a hero? No! I would not marry a hero after he had become a hero. It would be something to marry

a man who was afterward to become great, and be with him all the time of his poverty and his struggles and his expectations. That would be worth something—to comfort him when he was in despair, to be kind to him when he was suffering; and then, when it was all over and he had got his head above these troubles, he would say to you, 'Oh, Kate'—or Nell or Sue, as your name happened to be—'how good you were during the old time when we were poor and friendless!' But when he has become a hero, he thinks he will overawe you with the shadow of his great reputation. He thinks he has only to come and hold out the tips of his fingers, and say, 'I am a great person. Everybody worships me. I will allow you to share my brilliant fortune, and you will dutifully kiss me.' *Merci, monsieur!* but if any man were to come to me like that, I would answer him as Canning's knife-grinder was answered: 'I give you kisses? I will see you—'"

"Bell!" cried my lady, peremptorily.

Bell stopped, and then laughed and blushed, and dropped her eyes.

"What is one to do," she asked, meekly, "when a quotation comes in?"

"You used to be a good girl," said Queen Titania, in her severest manner, "but you are becoming worse and worse every day. I hear you sing horrid music-hall airs. You draw caricatures of old people who ought to command your veneration. The very maid-servants are shocked by your willful provincialisms. And you treat me, for whom you ought to show some respect, with a levity and familiarity without example. I will send a report of your behavior to—"

And here the look of mischief in Bell's eyes, which had been deepening just as you may see the pupils of a cat widening before she makes a spring, suddenly gave way to a glance of imploring and meek entreaty, which was recognized in the proper quarter. Tita named no names, and the storm blew over.

For the present, therefore, the project of adding this young Uhlan to our party was dropped, but the idea of our northward trip remained, and gradually as-

sumed definite consistency. Indeed, as it developed itself during those long winter evenings it came to be a thing to dream about. But all the same I could see that Titania sometimes returned to the notion of providing a companion for Bell; and, whatever may have been her dislike of the Germans in general, Lieutenant von Rosen was not forgotten. At odd times, when

In her hazel eyes her thoughts lay clear
As pebbles in a brook,

it seemed to me that she was busy with those forecasts which are dear to the hearts of women. One night we three were sitting as quietly as usual, talking about something else, when she suddenly remarked, "I suppose that young Count von Rosen is as poor as Prussian lieutenants generally are?"

"On the contrary," said I, "he enjoys a very handsome *Familien-Stiftung*, or family bequest, which gives him a certain sum of money every six months, on condition that during that time he has either traveled so much or gone through such and such a course of study. I wish the legacies left in our country had sometimes those provisions attached."

"He has some money, then," said my lady, thoughtfully.

"My dear," said I, "you seem to be very anxious about the future, like the man whose letter I read to you yesterday.* Have you any further questions to ask?"

"I suppose he cares for nothing but eating and drinking and smoking, like other officers? He has not been troubled by any great sentimental crisis?"

"On the contrary," I repeated, "he wrote me a despairing letter, some fortnight before the war broke out, about that same *Fräulein Fallersleben* whom we saw acting in the theatre at Han-

over. She had treated him very badly—she had—"

"Oh, that is all nothing," said Tita, hastily; and here she glanced rather nervously at Bell.

Bell, for her part, was unconcernedly fitting a pink collar on a white cat, and merely said in her frank and careless way, "How affecting must have been their meetings! 'Ah, da bist du ja mein Käthchen, mein Engel!' and 'Ach Gott, wie mir das Herz klopft!' Then I suppose she knitted him a comforter, and gave him a piece of sausage as he started for the war, with her blessing." Bell sighed plaintively, and continued her work with the pink collar.

"On the contrary," I remarked again, "he left her in paroxysms of anger and mutual reproach. He accused her of having—"

"Well, well, that will do," says Queen Titania, in her coldest manner; and then, of course, everybody obeys the small woman.

That was the last that was heard of Von Rosen for many a day; and it was not until long after the war was over that he favored us with a communication. He was still in France. He hoped to get over to England at the end of July; and as that was the time we had fixed for our journey from London to Edinburgh along the old coach-roads, he became insensibly mixed up with the project, until it was finally resolved to ask him to join the party.

"I know you mean to marry these two," I said to the person who manages us all.

"It is not true," she replied with a vast assumption of dignity. "Bell is as good as engaged, even if there was any fear of a handsome young Englishwoman falling in love with a Prussian lieutenant who is in despair about an actress."

"You had better take a wedding-ring with you."

"A wedding-ring!" said Tita, with a little curl of her lips. "You fancy that every girl thinks of nothing but that. My belief is, that every wedding-ring that is worn represents a man's impertinence and a woman's folly."

"Ask Bell," said I.

* This is the letter:

"To the Editor of the *Hampshire Ass:*

"SIR: If the Republicans who are endeavoring to introduce a Republic into this great country should accomplish their disgusting purpose, do you think they will repudiate the National Debt, and pay no more interest on the Consols?"

"I am, sir, your obedient servant,

"A LOVER OF MANKIND.

"BOGEMER, Jan. 18, 1870."

CHAPTER II.

A LUNCHEON IN HOLBORN.

From the bleak coast that hears
The German Ocean roar, deep-blooming, strong,
And yellow-haired, the blue-eyed Saxon came.

No more fitting point of departure could have been chosen than the Old Bell Inn in Holborn, an ancient hostelry which used in bygone times to send its relays of stage-coaches to Oxford, Cheltenham, Enfield, Abingdon, and a score of other places. Now from the quaint little yard, which is surrounded by frail and dilapidated galleries of wood, that tell of the grandeur of other days, there starts but a solitary omnibus, which daily whisks a few country-people and their parcels down to Uxbridge, and Chalfont, and Amersham, and Wendover. The vehicle which Mr. Thoroughgood has driven for many a year is no magnificent blue-and-scarlet drag, with teams costing six hundred guineas apiece, with silver harness, a postboy blowing a silver horn and a lord handling the reins, but a rough and serviceable little coach, which is worked for profit, and which is of vast convenience to the folks living in quiet Buckinghamshire villages apart from railways. From this old-fashioned inn, how that the summer had come round and our long-looked-for journey to the North had come near, we had resolved to start; and Bell having gravely pointed out the danger of letting our young Uhlan leave London hungry—lest habit should lead him to seize something by the way, and so get us into trouble—it was further proposed that we should celebrate our setting out with a luncheon of good roast beef and ale in the snug little parlor which abuts on the yard.

"And I hope," said Lady Titania, as we escaped from the roar of Holborn into the archway of the inn, "that the stupid fellow has got himself decently dressed. Otherwise we shall be mobbed."

The fact was, that Count von Rosen, not being aware that English officers rarely appear when off duty in uniform, had come straight from St. Denis to Calais, and from Calais to London, and from London to Leatherhead, without ever dreaming that he ought not to go

about in his regimentals. He drew no distinction between Herr Graf von Rosen and Seiner Majestät Lieutenant im —ten Uhlanen-Regimente; although he told us that when he issued from his hotel at Charing Cross to get into a cab, he was surprised to see a small crowd collect around the hansom, and no less surprised to observe the absence of military costume in the streets. Of course, the appearance of an Uhlan in the quiet village of Leatherhead caused a profound commotion; and had not Castor and Pollux been able to distance the assemblage of little boys who flocked around him at the station, it is probable he would have arrived at our house attended by that concourse of admirers. Bell was unjust enough to remark in private that he knew well enough, and that he only came down in uniform that he might appear in the character of a hero. As for my lady, she only expressed a dignified hope that he would not render us conspicuous by his costume or his manner so long as he chose to accompany us.

You should have seen the courteous and yet half-defiant way in which the women received him, as if they were resolved not to be overawed by the tall, browned, big-bearded man, and how, in about twenty minutes, they had insensibly got quite familiar with him, apparently won over by his careless laughter, by the honest stare of his light-blue eyes, and by a very boyish blush that sometimes overspread his handsome face when he stammered over an idiom or was asked some questions about his own exploits. Bell remained the most distant, but I could see that our future companion had produced a good impression on Queen Titania, for she began to take the management of him, and to give him counsel in a cold and practical manner, which is a sure mark of her favor. She told him he must put aside his uniform while in England. She described to him the ordinary costume worn by English gentlemen in traveling. And then she hoped he would take a preparation of quinine with him, considering that we should have to stay

in a succession of strange inns, and might be exposed to damp.

He went up to London that night, armed with a list of articles which he was to buy for himself before starting with us.

There was a long pause when we three found ourselves together again. At length Bell said, with rather an impatient air, "He is only a schoolboy, after all. He has the same irritating habit of laughing that he used to have at Bonn. I hate a man who has his mouth always open, like a swallow in the air, trying to catch anything that may come. And he is worse when he closes his lips and tries to give himself an intellectual look, like—like—"

"Like what, Bell?"

"Like a calf poisoning itself and trying to look like a red deer," said Bell with a sort of contemptuous warmth.

"I wish, Bell," said my lady, coldly and severely, "that you would give up those rude metaphors. You talk just as you did when you came fresh from Westmoreland: you have learnt nothing."

Bell's only answer was to walk, with rather a proud air, to the piano, and there she sat down and played a few bars. She would not speak, but the well-known old air spoke for her, for it said, as plain as words could say,

A North Country maid up to London had strayed,

Although with her nature it did not agree:

She wept, and she sighed, and she bitterly cried,

"I wish once again in the North I could be!"

"I think," continued Tita, in measured tones, "that he is a very agreeable and trustworthy young man—not very polished perhaps, but then he is a German. I look forward with great interest to see in what light our English country-life will strike him; and I hope, Bell, that he will not have to complain of the want of courtesy shown him by Englishwomen."

This was getting serious; so, being to some small and undefined extent master in my own house, I commanded Bell to sing the song she was petulantly strumming. That "fetched" Tita. Whenever Bell began to sing one of those old English ballads, which she did for the

most part from morning till night, there was a strange and tremulous thrill in her voice that would have disarmed her bitterest enemy, and straightway my lady would be seen to draw over to the girl, and put her arm round her shoulder, and then reward her, when the last chord of the accompaniment had been struck, with a grateful kiss. In the present instance the charm worked as usual, but no sooner had these two young people been reconciled than they turned on their mutual benefactor. Indeed, an observant stranger might have remarked in this household that when anything remotely bearing on a quarrel was made up between any two of its members, the third, the peacemaker, was expected to propose a dinner at Greenwich. The custom would have been more becoming had the cost been equally distributed, but there were three losers to one payer.

Well, when we got into the yard of the Old Bell the Buckinghamshire omnibus was being loaded, and among the first objects we saw was the stalwart figure of Von Rosen, who was talking to Mr. Thoroughgood as if he had known him all his life, and examining with a curious and critical eye the construction and accommodation of the venerable old vehicle. We saw with some satisfaction that he was now dressed in a suit of gray garments, with a wide-awake hat; and, indeed, there was little to distinguish him from an Englishman but the curious blending of color—from the tawny yellow of his moustache to the deep brown of his cropped beard—which is seldom absent from the hirsute decoration of a Prussian face. He came forward with a grave and ceremonious politeness to Queen Titania, who received him in her dignified, quaint, maternal fashion, and then he shook hands with Bell with an obviously unconscious air of indifference. Then, not noticing her silence, he talked to her, after we had gone inside, of the old-fashioned air of homeliness and comfort noticeable in the inn, of the ancient portraits and the quaint fireplace and the small busts placed about. We had not been in the snug little parlor a couple of minutes before he seemed to have

made himself familiar with every feature of it, and yet he spoke in a light way, as if he had not intended to make a study of the place, or as if he fancied his companion would care very little what he thought of it. Bell seemed rather vexed that he should address himself to her, and uttered scarcely a word in reply.

But when our plain and homely meal was served this restraint gradually wore away, and in the talk over our coming adventures Bell abandoned herself to all sorts of wild anticipations. She forgot the presence of the German lieutenant. Her eyes were fixed on the North Country, and on summer nights up amid the Westmoreland hills, and on bright mornings up by the side of the Scotch lochs; and while the young soldier looked gravely at her, and even seemed a trifle surprised, she told us of all the dreams and visions she had had of the journey for weeks and months back, and how the pictures of it had been with her night and day until she was almost afraid the reality would not bear them out. Then she described—as if she were gifted with second sight—the various occupations we should have to follow during the long afternoons in the North; and how she had brought her guitar, that Queen Titania might sing Spanish songs to it; and how we should go down on river-banks toward nightfall and listen to the nightingales; and how she would make studies of all the favorite places we came to, and perhaps might even construct a picture of our phaeton and Castor and Pollux, with a background of half a dozen counties, for some exhibition; and how, some day in the far future, when the memory of our long excursion had grown dim, Tita would walk into a room in Pall Mall, and there, with the picture before her, would turn round with wonder in her eyes, as if it were a revelation.

“Because,” said Bell, turning seriously to the young Uhlan, and addressing him as though she had talked familiarly to him for years, “you mustn’t suppose that our Tita is anything but an impostor. All her coldness and affectation of gran-

deur are only a pretence; and sometimes, if you watch her eyes—and she is not looking at you—you will see something come up to the surface of them as if it were her real heart and soul there, looking out in wonder and softness and delight at some beautiful thing; just like a dabchick, you know, when you are watching among bushes by a river, and are quite still, and then, if you make the least remark, if you rustle your dress, snap! down goes the dabchick, and you see nothing; and my lady turns to you quite proudly and coldly, though there may be tears in her eyes, and dares you to think that she has shown any emotion.”

“That is when she is listening to you singing?” said the lieutenant gravely and politely; and at this moment Bell seemed to become conscious that we were all amused by her vehemence, blushed prodigiously, and was barely civil to our Uhlan for half an hour after.

Nevertheless, she had every reason to be in a good humor, for we had resolved to limit our travels that day to Twickenham, where, in the evening, Tita was to see her two boys who were at school there. And as the young gentleman of the Temple, who has already been briefly mentioned in this narrative, is a son of the schoolmaster with whom the boys were then living, and as he was to be of the farewell party assembled in Twickenham at night, Bell had no unpleasant prospect before her, for that day at least. And of one thing she was probably by that time thoroughly assured—no fires of jealousy were in danger of being kindled in any sensitive breast in the manner of Count von Rosen toward her. Of course he was very courteous and obliging to a pretty young woman, but he talked almost exclusively to my lady, while, to state the plain truth, he seemed to pay more attention to his luncheon than to both of them together.

Behold, then, our phaeton ready to start! The pair of pretty bays are pawing the hard stones and pricking their ears at the unaccustomed sounds of Holborn; Sandy is at their head, regarding them rather dolefully, as if he feared to

let them slip from his care to undertake so long and perilous a voyage; Queen Titania has arranged that she shall sit behind, to show the young Prussian all the remarkable things on our route; and Bell, as she gets up in front, begs to have the reins given her so soon as we get away from the crowded thoroughfares. There are still a few loiterers on the pavement, who had assembled to see the Wendover omnibus leave, and these regard with a languid sort of curiosity the setting out of the party in the big, dark-green phaeton.

A little tossing of heads and prancing, a little adjustment of the reins and a final look round, and then we glide into the wild and roaring stream of vehicles—that mighty current of rolling vans and heavy wagons and crowded Bayswater omnibuses, of dexterous hansoms and indolent four-wheelers, of brewers' drays and post-office carts and costermongers' barrows. Over the great thoroughfare, with its quaint and huddled houses and its innumerable shops, in which silver watches and stockings and sausages form prominent features, there dwell a fine blue sky and white clouds that seem oddly discolored. The sky, seen through a curious pall of mist and smoke, is only gray; and the clouds are distant and dusky and yellow, like those of an old landscape that has lain for years in a broker's shop. Then there is a faint glow of sunlight shining along the houses on the northern side of the street, and here and there the window of some lobster-shop or tavern glints back the light. As we get farther westward the sky overhead gets clearer, and the character of the thoroughfare alters. Here we are at the street leading up to the British Museum—a Mudie and a Moses on each hand—and it would almost seem as if the Museum had sent out rays of influence to create around it a series of smaller collections. In place of the humble fishmonger and the familiar hosier, we have owners of large windows filled with curious treasures of art—old-fashioned jewelry, knickknacks of furniture, silver spoons and kettles, and stately portraits of the time of

Charles II., in which the women have all beaded black eyes, yellow curls and a false complexion, while the men are fat, pompous and wigged. Westward still, and we approach the huge shops and warehouses of Oxford street, where the last waves of fashionable life, seeking millinery, beat on the eastern barriers that shut out the rest of London. Regent street is busy on this quiet afternoon; and Bell asks in a whisper whether the countryman of Blücher, now sitting behind us, does not betray in his eyes what he thinks of this vast show of wealth. Listening for a moment, we hear that Queen Titania, instead of talking to him about the shops, is trying to tell him what London was in the last century, and how Colonel Jack and his associates, before that enterprising youth started to walk from London to Edinburgh to avoid the law, used to waylay travelers in the fields between Gray's Inn and St. Pancras, and how, having robbed a coach between Hyde Park Gate and Knightsbridge, they "went over the fields to Chelsea." This display of erudition on the part of my lady has evidently been prepared beforehand, for she even goes the length of quoting dates and furnishing a few statistics—a thing which no woman does inadvertently. However, when we get into Pall Mall, her ignorance of the names of the clubs reveals the superficial nature of her acquirements, for even Bell is able to recognize the Reform, assisted, doubtless, by the polished pillars of the Carlton. The women are, of course, eager to know which is the Prince of Wales' Club, and then look with quite a peculiar interest on the brick wall of Marlborough House.

"Now," says our bonny Bell as we get into the quiet of St. James' Park, where the trees of the long avenue and the shrubbery around the ponds look quite pleasant and fresh even under the misty London sunlight—"now you must let me have the reins. I am wearying to get away from the houses and be really on the road to Scotland. Indeed, I shall not feel that we have actually set out until we leave Twickenham, and are

fairly on the old coach-road at Hounslow."

I looked at Bell. She did not blush, but calmly waited to take the reins. I had then to point out to the young hypocrite that her wiles were of no avail. She was not anxious to be beyond Twickenham: she was chiefly anxious to get down thither. Notwithstanding that she knew we had chosen a capricious and roundabout road to reach this first stage on our journey, merely to show Von Rosen something of London and its suburban beauties, she was looking with impatience to the long circuit by Clapham Common, Wimbledon and Richmond Park. Therefore she was not in a condition to be entrusted with the safety of so valuable a freight.

"I am not impatient," said Bell, with her color a trifle heightened: "I do not care whether we ever get to Twickenham. I would as soon go to Henley to-night, and to-morrow to Oxford. But it is just like a man to make a great fuss and go in prodigious circles to reach a trifling distance. You go circling and circling like the minute-hand of a clock, but the small hand, that takes it easy and makes no clatter of ticking, finds at twelve o'clock that it has got quite as far as its big companion."

"This, Bell," I remarked, "is impertinence."

"Will you give me the reins?"

"No."

Bell turned half round and leaned her arm on the lowered hood. "My dear," she said to Queen Titania, who had been telling the count something about Buckingham Palace, "we have forgotten one thing. What are we to do when our companions are sulky during the day? In the evening we can read, or sing, or walk about by ourselves. But during the day, Tita? When we are imprisoned how are we to escape?"

"We shall put you in the imperial, if you are not a good girl," said my lady with a gracious sweetness, and then she turned to the count.

It would have been cruel to laugh at Bell. For a minute or two after meeting with this rebuff she turned rather away

from us, and stared with a fine assumption of proud indifference down the Vauxhall Bridge road. But presently a lurking smile began to appear about the corners of her mouth, and at last she cried out—"Well, there is no use quarreling with a married man, for he never pets you. He is familiar with the trick of it, I suppose, and looks on like an old juggler watching the efforts of an amateur. See how lovely the river is up there by Chelsea—the long reach of rippling gray, the green of the trees, and the curious silvery light that almost hides the heights beyond! We shall see the Thames often, shall we not? and then the Severn, and then the Solway, and then the great Frith of the Forth? When I think of it, I feel like a bird—a lark fluttering up in happiness, and seeing farther and farther every minute. To see the Solway, you know, you have to be up almost in the blue, and then all around you there rise the wide plains of England, with fields and woods and streams. Fancy being able to see as far as a vulture, and to go swooping on for leagues and leagues—now up amid white peaks of snow, or down through some great valley, or across the sea in the sunset! And only fancy that some evening you might find the spectral ship beginning to appear in pale fire in the mist of the horizon, coming on toward you without a sound! Do you know that is the most terrible legend ever thought of?"

"What has a vulture to do with the Flying Dutchman?" said my lady Tita suddenly, and Bell turned with a start to find her friend's head close to her own. "You are becoming incoherent, Bell, and your eyes are as wild as if you were really looking at the phantom ship. Why are you not driving?"

"Because I am not allowed," said Bell.

However, when we got into the Clapham road, Bell had her wish. She took her place with the air of a practiced whip, and did not even betray any nervousness when a sudden whistle behind us warned her that she was in the way of a tramway-car. Moreover she managed to subdue so successfully her im-

patience to get to Twickenham that she was able to take us in the gentlest manner possible up and across Clapham Common, down through Wandsworth, and up again toward Wimbledon.

When at length we got to the brow of the hill that overlooks the long and undulating stretches of furze, the admiration of our Prussian friend, which had been called forth by the various parks and open spaces in and around London, almost rose to the pitch of enthusiasm. "Is 'it the sea down there?" he asked, looking toward the distant tent-poles, which certainly resembled a small forest of masts in the haze of the sunshine. "It is not the sea? I almost expect to reach the shore always in England. Yet why have you so beautiful places like this around London—so much more beautiful than the sandy country around our Berlin—and no one to come to it? You have more than three millions of people—here is a playground—why do they not come? And Clapham Common, too—it is not used for people to walk in, as we should use it in Germany, and have a pleasant seat in a garden, and the women sewing until their husbands and friends come in the evening, and music to make it pleasant afterward. It is nothing—a waste—a landscape; very beautiful, but not used. You have children on donkeys, and boys playing their games: that is very good, but it is not enough. And here this beautiful park, all thrown away—no one here at all. Why does not your burgomaster see the—the requirement—of drawing away large numbers of people from so big a town for fresh air, and make here some amusements?"

"Consider the people who live all around," said my lady, "and what they would have to suffer."

"Suffer?" said the young Prussian, with his blue eyes staring. "I do not understand you. For people to walk through gardens, and smoke, and drink a glass or two of beer, or sit under the trees and sew or read—surely that is not offensive to any person. And here the houses are miles away: you cannot

see them down beyond the windmill there."

"Did you ever hear of such things as manorial rights, and freeholders, and copyholders, and the Statute of Merton?" he is asked.

"All that is nothing—a fiction," he retorted. "You have a government in this country representing the people: why not take all these commons and use them for the people? And if the government has not courage to do that, why do not your municipalities, which are rich, buy up the land, and provide amusements, and draw the people into the open air?"

My lady Tita could scarce believe her ears in hearing a Prussian aristocrat talk thus coolly of confiscation, and exhibit no more reverence for the traditional rights of property than if he were a Parisian Socialist. But then these boys of twenty-four will dance over the world's edge in pursuit of a theory.

Here, too, as Bell gently urged our horses forward toward the crest of the slope leading down to Baveley Bridge, Von Rosen got his first introduction to an English landscape. All around him lay the brown stretches of sand and the blue-green clumps of furze of the common; on either side of the wide and well-made road the tall banks were laden with a tangled luxuriance of brushwood and bramble and wild flowers; down in the hollow beneath us there were red-tiled farm-buildings half hid in a green maze of elms and poplars; then the scattered and irregular fields and meadows, scored with hedges and dotted with houses, led up to a series of heights that were wooded with every variety of forest tree; while over all these undulations and plains there lay that faint presence of mist which only served to soften the glow of the afternoon sunshine, and show us the strong colors of the picture through a veil of tender, ethereal gray.

As we got down the hill and rolled along the valley, however, he was not much struck with the appearance of our first wayside public—"The DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE, by S. LUCAS." There was

a good deal of squalor about the rude little building and its ramshackle out-houses; while the open window showed us a small and stuffy parlor filled with men who, having nothing to do but sit and drink, might just as well have been outside on this warm afternoon. Nevertheless, there was something picturesque about even the dirt of the place; while the ducks and hens about, a brown goat, and two or three splendid dray-horses being watered at the wooden trough, gave the place the look of a farmyard. Bell drove on to "The ROBIN HOOD, by E. CLARK," a much cleaner-looking inn, where Queen Titania pointed out a sort of garden with bowers round it as our best imitation of the German beer-garden; and here, having given the horses a little water, we turned back a few yards and entered Richmond Park by the Robin Hood gate.

Richmond Park, in the stillness of a fine sunset, was worth bringing a foreigner to see. The ruddy light from the west was striking here and there among the glades under the oaks; across the bars of radiance and shadow the handsome little bucks and long-necked does were lightly passing and repassing; while there were rabbits in thousands trotting in and about the brackens, with an occasional covey of young partridges alternately regarding us with upstretched necks and then running off a few yards farther. But after we had bowled along the smooth and level road, up and through the avenues of stately oaks, past the small lakes (one of them, beyond the shadow of a dark wood, gleamed like a line of gold), and up to the summit of Richmond Hill, Queen Titania had not a word to say further in pointing out the beauties of the place. She had been officiating as conductor, but it was with the air of a proprietress. Now, as we stopped the phaeton on the crest of the hill, she was silent.

Far away behind us lay the cold green of the eastern sky, and under it the smoke of London lay red and brown, while in the extreme distance we could see dim traces of houses, and down in the south a faint rosy mist. Some glit-

tering yellow rays showed us where the Crystal Palace, high over the purple shadows of Sydenham, caught the sunlight; and up by Notting Hill, too, there were one or two less distinct glimmerings of glass. But when we turned to the west no such range of vision was permitted to us. All over the bed of the river there lay across the western sky a confused glare of pale gold—not a distinct sunset, with sharp lines of orange and blood-red fire, but a bewildering haze that blinded the eyes and was rather ominous for the morrow. Along the horizon,

Where, enthroned in adamantine state,
Proud of her bards, imperial Windsor sits,

there was no trace of the gray towers to be made out, but a confused and level mass of silver streaks and lines of blue. Nearer at hand, the spacious and wooded landscape seemed almost dark under the glare of the sky, and the broad windings of the Thames lay white and clear between the soft green of the Twickenham shores and the leafy masses of "umbrageous Ham."

"Doesn't it seem as though the strange light away up there in the north and out in the west lay over some unknown country," said Bell, with her eyes filled with the glamour of the sunset, "and that to-morrow we were to begin our journey into a great prairie, and leave houses and people for ever behind us? You can see no more villages, but only miles and miles of woods and plains, until you come to a sort of silver mist, and that might be the sea."

"And Bell stands on the edge of this wild and golden desert, and a melancholy look comes into her eyes. For she is fond of houses and her fellow-creatures, and here, just close at hand—down there in Twickenham, in fact—there is a comfortable dining-room and some pleasant friends, and one attentive person in particular, who is perhaps a little sorry to bid her good-bye. Yet she does not falter. To-morrow morning she will hold out her hand: a tender and wistful smile will only half convey her sadness—"

Here Bell made a cut at Pollux; both

the horses sprang forward with a jerk that had nearly thrown the lieutenant into the road (for he was standing up and holding on by the hood); and then, without another word, she rattled us down into Richmond. Getting sharply round the corner, she pretty nearly took a wheel off the omnibus that was standing in front of the King's Head, and just escaped knocking down a youth in white costume and boating shoes, who jumped back on the pavement with an admirable dexterity. Nor would she stop to give us a look at the Thames from the bridge: we only caught a glimpse of the broad bend of the water, the various boats and their white-clad crews, the pleasant river-paths, and the green and wooded heights all around. She swept us on along the road leading into Twickenham, past the abodes of the Orleanist princes, and into the narrow streets of the village itself, until, with a proud and defiant air, she pulled the horses up in front of Dr. Ashburton's house.

There *was* a young man at the window: she pretended not to see him. When the servants had partly got our luggage out the young man made his appearance, and came forward, in rather a frightened way, as I thought, to pay his respects to my lady Tita and Bell. Then he glanced at the Uhlán, who was carefully examining the horses' fetlocks and hoofs. Finally, as the doctor had no stables, Master Arthur informed us that he had made arrangements about putting up the horses; and while the rest of us went into the house, he volunteered to take the phaeton round to the inn. He and the count went off together.

Then there was a wild commotion on the first landing, a confused tumble and rush down stairs, and presently Bell and Tita were catching up two boys and hugging them, and pulling out all sorts of mysterious presents.

"Heh! how fens tee, Jeck?—gayly?" cried Auntie Bell, whose broad Cumberlandshire vastly delighted the youngsters. "Why, Twom, thou's growin' a big lad: thou muä as weel be a sodger as

at schuil. Can tee dance a whornpipe yet?—what! nowther o' ye? Dost think I's gaun to gie a siller watch to twa feckless fallows that canna dance a whornpipe?"

But here Bell's mouth was stopped by a multitude of kisses, and having had to confess that the two silver watches were really in her pocket, she was drawn into the parlor by the two boys and made to stand and deliver.

CHAPTER III.

"PRINZ EUGEN, DER EDLE RITTER."

What can Tommy Onslow do?

He can drive a phaeton and two.

Can Tommy Onslow do no more?

MEANWHILE, what had become of the lieutenant, and Arthur, and Castor and Pollux, to say nothing of the phaeton, which had now been transferred from its accustomed home in Surrey to spend a night under a shed in Twickenham? The crooked byways and narrow streets of that curious little village were getting rapidly darker under the falling dusk, and here and there orange lamps were beginning to shine in the blue-gray of the twilight, when I set out to discover the stable to which our horses had been confided. I had got but halfway to the public-house when I met Arthur. The ordinarily mild and gentle face of this young man—which would be quite feminine in character but for a soft, pale-yellow moustache—looked rather gloomy.

"Where is the count?" I asked of him.

"Do you mean that German fellow?" he said.

The poor young man! It was easy to detect the cause of that half-angry contempt with which he spoke of our lieutenant. It was jealousy, with its green eyes and dark imaginings, and the evening, I could see, promised us a pretty spectacle of the farce of Bell and the Dragon. At present I merely requested Master Arthur to answer my question.

"Well," said he, with a fine expression of irony—the unhappy wretch! as if it were not quite obvious that he was more inclined to cry—"if you want to

keep him out of the police-office, you'd better go down to the stables of the —. He has raised a pretty quarrel there, I can tell you—kicked the ostler half across the yard—knocked heaps of things to smithereens—and is ordering everybody about, and fuming and swearing in a dozen different inarticulate languages. I wish you joy of your companion. You will have plenty of adventures by the way, but what will you do with all the clocks you gather?"

"Go home, you stupid boy! and thank God you have not the gift of sarcasm. Bell is waiting for you. You will talk very sensibly to her, I dare say, but don't make any jokes—not for some years to come."

Arthur went his way into the twilight, as wretched a young man as there was that evening in Twickenham.

Now in front of the public-house, and adjoining the entrance into the yard, a small and excited crowd had collected of all the idlers and loungers who hang about the doors of a tavern. In the middle of them—as you could see when the yellow light from the window streamed through a chink in the cluster of human figures—there was a small, square-set, bandy-legged man, with a red waistcoat, a cropped head and a peaked cap, with the peak turned sideways. He was addressing his companions alternately in an odd mixture of Buckinghamshire *patois* and Middlesex pronunciation, somewhat in this fashion: "I bain't afeard of 'm, or any other darned foreigner, the —. An' I've looked arter awsses afore he wur born, and I'd like to see the mahn as'll tell me what I don't know about 'em. I've kept my plaâce for fifteen yur, and I'll bet the coöt on my bahek as my missus'll say there niver wur a better in the plaâce; an' as fur thaht — furrener in there, the law'll teach him summut, or I'm werry much mistaken. Eh, 'Arry? Bain't I right?"

This impassioned appeal from the excited small man was followed by a general chorus of assent.

I made my way down the yard, between the shafts of dog-carts and the

poles of disabled omnibuses that loomed from out the darkness of a long and low shed. Down at the foot of this narrow and dusky channel a stable door was open, and the faint yellow light occasionally caught the figure of a man who was busy grooming a horse outside. As I picked my way over the rough stones I could hear that he was occasionally interrupting the hissing noise peculiar to the work with a snatch of a song, carelessly sung in a deep and sufficiently powerful voice. What was it he sang? — "*Prinz Eugen, der edle Ritter*—— hisssssss——*wollt dem Kaiser wiedrum kriegen*——wo! my beauty—so ho!——*Stadt und Festung Belgarad!*——hold up, my lad! wo ho!"

"Hillo, Oswald, what are you about?"

"Oh, only looking after the horses," said our young Uhlan, slowly raising himself up.

He was in a remarkable state of undress—his coat, waistcoat and collar having been thrown on the straw inside the stable—and he held in his hand a brush.

"The fellows at this inn, they are very ignorant of horses, or very careless."

"I hear you have been kicking 'em all about the place."

"Why not? You go in to have a glass of beer and see the people. You come back to the stables. The man says he has fed the horses: it is a lie. He says he has groomed them: it is a lie. *Jott im Himmel!* can I not see? Then I drive him away—I take out corn for myself, also some beans: he comes back—he is insolent—I fling him into the yard: he falls over the pail—he lies and groans. That is very good for him: it will teach him to mind his business, and not to tell lies and to steal the price of the corn."

I pointed out to this cool young person that if he went kicking insolent ostlers all over the country, he would get us into trouble.

"Is it not a shame they do not know their work? and that they will ruin good horses to steal a sixpence from you?"

"Besides," I said, "it is not prudent to quarrel with an ostler, for you must leave your horses under his care, and if

he should be ill-natured he may do them a mischief during the night."

The count laughed as he untied the halter and led Pollux into a loose box. "Do not be alarmed. I never allow any man to lock up my horses if I am among strangers. I do that myself. I will lock up this place and take the key, and to-morrow at six I will come round and see them fed. No! you must not object. It is a great pleasure of mine to look after horses, and I shall become friends with these two in a very few days. You must let me manage them always."

"And groom them twice a day?"

"*Nee, Gott bewahre!* When there is a man who can do it, I will not; but when there is no one, it is a very good thing to help yourself."

Lieutenant Oswald von Rosen had clearly learned how to conjugate the verb *requiriren* during his sojourn in Bohemia and in France. He made another raid on the corn and split beans, got up into the loft and crammed down plenty of hay, and then bringing a heap of clean straw into the place, tossed it plentifully about the loose box devoted to Pollux, and about Castor's stall. Then he put on his upper vestments, brought away the candle, locked the door and put the key in his pocket, humming all the time something about "*die dreimal hunderttausend Mann.*"

When we had got to the gate of the yard, he stalked up to the small crowd of idlers and said, "Which of you is the man who did tumble over the pail? It is you, you little fellow? Well, you deserve much more than you got; but here is a half crown for you to buy sticking-plaster with."

The small ostler held back, but his companions, who perceived that the half crown meant beer, urged him to go forward and take it; which he did, saying, "Well, I don't bear no malice."

"And next time you have gentlemen's horses put into your stables, don't try to steal the price of their corn," said the lieutenant; and with that he turned and walked away.

"Who is the gentleman who came with me?" asked my young friend, as we

went back to the house. "He is a nice young man, but he does not know the difference between hay and straw, and I begged him not to remain. And he would not drink the beer of this public-house; but that is the way of all you Englishmen—you are so particular about things, and always thinking of your health, and always thinking of living, instead of living and thinking nothing about it. Ah, you do not know how fine a thing it is to live until you have been in a campaign, my dear friend, and then you know how fine it is that you can eat with great hunger, and how fine it is when you get a tumbler of wine, and how fine it is to sleep. You are very glad then to be able to walk firm on your legs, and find yourself alive and strong. But always, I think, your countrymen do not enjoy being alive so much as mine: they are always impatient for something, trying to do something, hoping for something, instead of being satisfied of finding every day a good new day, and plenty of satisfaction in it, with talking to people, and seeing things, and a cigar now and again. Just now, when I wake, I laugh to myself, and say, 'How very good it is to sleep in a bed, and shut yourself out from noise, and get up when you please!' Then you have a good breakfast, and all the day begins afresh, and you have no fear of being crippled and sent off to the hospital. Oh, it is very good to have this freedom—this carelessness—this seeing of new things and new people every day! And that is a very pretty young lady become, your Miss Bell: I do remember her only a shy little girl, who spoke German with your strange English way of pronouncing the vowels, and was very much bashful over it. Oh yes, she is very good-looking, indeed: her hair looks as if there were streaks of sunshine in the brown, and her eyes are very thoughtful, and she has a beautiful outline of the chin that makes her neck and throat very pretty. And, you know, I rather like the nose not hooked, like most of your English young ladies: when it is a little the other way, and fine, and delicate, it makes the face piquant and

tender, not haughty and cold—*nicht wahr?* But yet she is very English-looking; I would take her as a—as a—a—type, do you call it?—of the pretty young Englishwoman, well formed, oper-eyed, with good healthy color in her face, and very frank and gentle and independent, all at the same time. Oh, she is a very good girl—a very good girl, I can see that."

"Yes," I said, "I think she will marry the young man whom you saw to-night."

"And that will be very good for him," he replied easily, "for she will look after him and give him some common sense. He is not practical—he has not seen much: he is moody and nervous, and thinks greatly about trifles. But I think he will be very amiable to her, and that is much. You know, all the best women marry stupid men."

There was, however, no need for our going into that dangerous subject; for at this moment we arrived at Dr. Ashburton's house. Von Rosen rushed up stairs to his room to remove the traces of his recent employment; and then, as we both entered the drawing-room, we found Bell standing right under the central gasolier, which was pouring its rays down on her wealth of golden-brown hair. Indeed, she then deserved all that Von Rosen had said about her being a type of our handsome young Englishwomen—rather tall, well formed, showing a clear complexion and healthy rosiness in her cheeks, while there was something at once defiant and gentle in her look. Comely enough she was to attract the notice of any stranger; but it was only those who had spent years with her, and had observed all her winning ways, her unselfishness, and the rare honor and honesty that lay behind all her pretty affectations of petulance and the wild nonsense of her tongue, who could really tell what sort of young person our bonny Bell was. She was sufficiently handsome to draw eyes toward her;

But if ye saw that which no eyes can see,
The inward beauty of her lovely spirit,
Garnish'd with heavenly gifts of high degree,
Much more then would ye wonder at that sight.

* * * * *

There dwell sweet Love and constant Chastity,
Unspotted Faith and comely Womanhood,
Regard of Honor, and mild Modesty.

And it must be said that during this evening Bell's conduct was beyond all praise. Arthur Ashburton was rather cold and distant toward her, and was obviously in a rather bad temper. He even hovered on the verge of rudeness toward both herself and the lieutenant. Now, nothing delighted Bell more than to vary the even and pleasant tenor of her life with a series of pretty quarrels which had very little element of seriousness in them; but on this evening, when she was provoked into quarreling in earnest, nothing could exceed the good sense and gentleness and forbearance she showed. At dinner she sat between the young barrister and his father, a quiet, little gray-haired man in spectacles, with small black eyes that twinkled strangely when he made his nervous little jokes, and looked over to his wife, the very matter-of-fact and roseate woman who sat at the opposite end of the table. The old doctor was a much more pleasant companion than his son, but Bell, with wonderful moderation, did her best to re-establish good relations between the moody young barrister and herself. Of course, no woman will prolong such overtures indefinitely, and at last the young gentleman managed to establish a more serious breach than he had dreamed of. For the common talk had drifted back to the then recent war, and our lieutenant was telling us a story about three Uhlans who had, out of mere bravado, ridden down the main street of a French village and out at the other end, without having been touched by the shots fired at them, when young Ashburton added, with a laugh, "I suppose they were so padded with the jewelry and watches they had gathered on their way that the bullets glanced off."

Count von Rosen looked across the table at the young man with a sort of wonder in his light-blue eyes, and then, with admirable self-control, he turned to my lady Tita and calmly continued the story.

But as for Bell, a blush of shame and

exceeding mortification overspread her features. No madness of jealousy could excuse this open insult to a stranger and a guest. From that moment Bell addressed herself exclusively to the old doctor, and took no more notice of his son than if he had been in the moon. She was deeply hurt, but she managed to conceal her disappointment; and indeed, when the boys came in after dinner, she had so far picked up her spirits as to be able to talk to them in that wild way which they regarded with mingled awe and delight. For they could not understand how Auntie Bell was allowed to use strange words, and even talk Cumberlandshire, to the doctor's own face.

Of course she plied the boys with all sorts of fruit and sweetmeats, until Tita, coming suddenly back from the campaign in France to the table before her, peremptorily ordered her to cease. And then Bell gathered round her the decanters. "I say, Jack," she observed, in a whisper, though looking covertly at Queen Tita all the time, "what's good for a fellow that's got a cold?"

"I beg your pardon," said Master Jack, properly.

"What's good for a cold, you stupid small boy?"

"But you haven't got a cold, Auntie Bell."

"Oh, haven't I? You don't know there are all sorts of colds. There's the little fairy that sits and tickles you with a feather, just now and again, you know; and there's the sweep that drives a tremendous whalebone brush up and down, and makes you blue in the face with fighting him. Mind, when the sweep does get hold of you, it's a terrible bother to shunt him out."

"Bell," said my lady, with a sharpness that made the boys look frightened, "you must not teach the children such phrases."

"I think it's very hard that a grown-up person can't speak three words without being scolded," remarked Bell, confidentially, to Master Tom; and that young ruffian, looking covertly at his mother, grinned as widely as a mouthful of apple would let him.

So the boys had their half glass of wine, and Bell swept them away with her into the drawing-room when the women left.

"A very bright young lady—hm!—a very bright and pleasant young lady, indeed," said the doctor, stretching out his short legs with an air of freedom, and beginning to examine the decanters. "I don't wonder the young fellows rave about her: eh, Arthur, eh?"

Master Arthur rose and left the room.

"Touched, eh?" said the father, with his eyes twinkling vehemently and his small gray features twisted into a smile. "Hit hard, eh? Gad, I don't wonder at it: if I were a young fellow myself—eh, eh? Claret? Yes. But the young fellows now don't sing about their laughing Lalage, or drink to Glyceria, or make jokes with Lydia: it is all dreaming, and reading, and sighing, eh, eh? That boy of mine has gone mad—heeds nothing—is ill-tempered—"

"Decidedly, doctor."

"Eh? Ill-tempered? Why his mother daren't talk to him, and we're glad to have him go up to his chambers again. Our young friend here is of another sort: there is no care about a woman tempering the healthy brown of the sun and the weather, eh?—is there, eh?"

"Why, my dear doctor," cried the lieutenant, with a prodigious laugh, "don't you think Lydia's lover—*Lydia, dic*, you know—he was very glad to be away from rough sports? He had other enjoyments. I am brown not because of my wish, but that I have been made to work, that is all."

The doctor was overjoyed, and perhaps a trifle surprised, to find that this tall Uhlan, who had just been grooming two horses, understood his references to Horace; and he immediately cried out, "No, no: you must not lose your health, and your color, and your temper. Would you have your friends say of you, who have just been through a campaign in France,

*Cur neque militaris
Inter æquales militat, Gallica nec lupatis
Temperat ora frenis?*

Eh, eh?"

"*Temperat ora frenis*—it is a 'good motto for our driving excursion," said the count; "but was it your Miss Bell who called your two fine horses by such stupid names as Castor and Pollux?"

"Nevertheless," said the doctor eagerly, "Castor was said to have great skill in the management of horses—eh, eh, eh?"

"Certainly," said the count. "And both together they foretell good weather, which is a fine thing in driving."

"And they were the gods of boundaries," cried the doctor.

"And they got people out of trouble when everything seemed all over," returned the count, "which may also happen to our phaeton."

"And—and—and"—here the doctor's small face fairly gleamed with a joke, and he broke into a thin, high chuckle—"they ran away with two ladies—eh, eh, eh? Did they not? did they not?"

Presently we went into the drawing-room, and there the women were found in a wild maze of maps, eagerly discussing the various routes to the North and the comparative attractions of different towns. The contents of Mr. Stanford's shop seemed to have been scattered about the room, and Bell had armed herself with an opisometer, which gave her quite an air of importance.

The lieutenant was out of this matter, so he flung himself down into an easy-chair, and presently had both the boys on his knees, telling them stories and propounding arithmetical conundrums alternately. When Queen Titania came to release him, the young rebels refused to go; and one of them declared that the count had promised to sing the "Wacht am Rhein."

"Oh, please, don't!" said Bell, suddenly turning round, with a map of Cumberland half hiding her. "You don't know that all the organs here have it. But if you would be so good as to sing us a German song, I will play the accompaniment for you, if I know it, and I know a great many."

Of course the women did not imagine that a man who had been accustomed to a soldier's life, and who betrayed a fac-

ulty for grooming horses, was likely to know much more of music than a handy chorus, but the count, lightly saying he would not trouble her, went over to the piano and sat down unnoticed amid the general hum of conversation.

But the next moment there was sufficient silence. For with a crash like thunder—"Hei! das klang wie Ungewitter!"—the young lieutenant struck the first chords of "Prinz Eugen," and with a sort of upward toss of the head, as if he were making room for himself, he began to sing Freiligrath's picturesque soldier-song to the wild and warlike and yet stately music which Dr. Löwe has written for it. What a rare voice he had, too!—deep, strong, and resonant—that seemed to throw itself into the daring spirit of the music with an absolute disregard of delicate graces or sentimental effect; a powerful, masculine, soldier-like voice, that had little flute-like softness, but the strength and thrill that told of a deep chest, and that interpenetrated or rose above the loudest chords that his ten fingers struck. Queen Tita's face was overspread with surprise—Bell unconsciously laid down the map, and stood as one amazed. The ballad, you know, tells how, one calm night on the banks of the Danube, just after the great storming of Belgrade, a young trumpeter in the camp determines to leave aside cards for a while, and make a right good song for the army to sing—how he sets to work to tell the story of the battle in ringing verse, and at last, when he has got the rhymes correct, he makes the notes too, and his song is complete. "Ho, ye white troops and ye red troops, come round and listen!" he cries; and then he sings the record of the great deeds of Prince Eugene; and lo! as he repeats the air for the third time, there breaks forth, with a hoarse roar as of thunder, the chorus "Prinz Eugen der edle Ritter!" until the sound of it is carried even into the Turkish camp. And then the young trumpeter, not dissatisfied with his performance, proudly twirls his moustache, and finally sneaks away to tell of his triumph to the pretty Marketenderin. When our young Uhlan

rose from the piano he laughed in an apologetic fashion, but there was still in his face some of that glow and fire which had made him forget himself during the singing of the ballad, and which had lent to his voice that penetrating resonance that still seemed to linger about the room. Bell said "Thank you" in rather a timid fashion, but Queen Tita did not speak at all, and seemed to have forgotten us.

We had more music that evening, and Bell produced her guitar, which was expected to solace us much on our journey. It was found that the lieutenant could play that too; and he executed at least a very pretty accompaniment when Bell sang "Der Tyroler und sein Kind." But you should have seen the face of Master Arthur when Bell volunteered to sing a German song! I believe she did it to show that she was not altogether frightened by the gloomy and mysterious silence which he preserved, as he sat in a corner and stared at everybody.

So ended our first day; and to-morrow—why, to-morrow we pass away from big cities, and their suburbs, from multitudes of friends, late hours, and the whirl of amusements and follies, into the still seclusion of English country-life,

with its simple habits and fresh pictures, and the quaint humors of its inns.

[*Note by Queen Titania, written at Twickenham*]"—“The foregoing pages give a more or less accurate account of our setting out, but they are *all wrong* about Bell. Men are far worse than women in imagining love-affairs, and supposing that girls think about nothing else. Bell wishes to be *let alone*. If gentlemen care to make themselves uncomfortable about her, she cannot help it; but it is rather *unfair* to drag her into any such complications. I am *positive* that, though she has doubtless a little pity for that young man who vexes himself and his friends because he is not good enough for her, she would not be sorry to see him and Count von Rosen—and *some one else besides*—all start off on a cruise to Australia. She is quite content to be as she is. Marriage will come in good time, and when it comes, she will get plenty of it, *sure enough*. In the mean time, I hope she will not be suspected of encouraging those idle flirtations and pretences of worship with which gentlemen think they ought to approach every girl whose *good fortune* it is not to be married.
T.”



PART II.

CHAPTER IV.

MASTER ARTHUR VANISHES.

Hampton me taught to wish her first for mine :
Windsor, alas ! does chase me from her sight.

"RAIN!" cried Queen Titania as she walked up to the window of the breakfast-room and stared reproachfully out on cloudy skies, gloomy trees and the wet thoroughfares of Twickenham.

"Surely not!" said Bell, in piteous tones; and therewith she too walked up to one of the panes, while an expression of deep mortification settled down on her face. She stood so for a second or two, irresolute and hurt, and then a revengeful look came into her eyes: she walked firmly over to my lady, got close up to her ear and apparently uttered a single word.

Tita almost jumped back, and then she looked at the girl. "Bell, how dare you?" she said, almost angrily.

Bell turned and shyly glanced at the rest of us, probably to make sure none of us had heard, and then, all this mysterious transaction being brought to a close, she returned to the table and calmly took up a newspaper. But presently she threw it aside, and glanced, with some heightened color in her face and some half-frightened amusement in her eyes, toward Tita; and lo! that majestic little woman was still regarding the girl, and there was surprise as well as sternness in her look.

Presently the brisk step of Lieutenant von Rosen was heard outside, and in a minute or two the tall young man came into the room, with a fine color in his face and a sprinkling of rain about his big brown beard. "Ha! Not late? No? That is very good!"

"But it rains," said Tita to him in an injured way, as if any one who had been out of doors was necessarily responsible for the weather.

"Not much," he said. "It may go

off; but about six it did rain very hard, and I got a little wet, I think."

"And where were you at six?" said Queen Tita, with her pretty brown eyes open wide.

"At Isleworth," he said, carelessly; and then he added, "Oh, I have done much business this morning, and bought something for your two boys, which will make them not mind that you go away. It is hard, you know, they are left behind—"

"But Bell has given them silver watches!" said mamma. "Is not that enough?"

"They will break them in a day. Now, when I went to the stables this morning to feed the horses, the old ostler was there. We had a quarrel last night, but no matter. We became very good friends: he told me much about Buckinghamshire and himself—he told me he did know your two boys—he told me he knew of a pony—oh, a very nice little pony!—that was for sale from a gentleman in Isleworth—"

"And you've bought them a pony!" cried Bell, clapping her hands.

"Bell," said Queen Tita, with a severe look, "how foolish you are! How could you think of anything so absurd?"

"But she is quite right, madame," said the lieutenant, "and it will be here in an hour, and you must not tell them till it comes."

"And you mean to leave them with that animal? Why, they will break their necks, both of them," said my lady.

"Oh no!" hurriedly said the lieutenant: "a tumble does not hurt boys, not at all. And this is a very quiet, small pony—oh, I did pull him about to try—and he will not harm anybody. And very rough and strong: I think the old man did call him a Scotland pony."

"A Shetland pony."

"Ah, very well," said our Uhlan; and then he began to turn wistful eyes to the breakfast-table.

They sat down to breakfast, almost forgetting the rain. They were all very well pleased with the coming of the pony. It would be a capital thing for the boys' health—it would be this and be that; but only one person there reflected that this addition to the comforts of the two young ruffians up stairs would certainly cost him sixteen shillings a week all the year round.

Suddenly, in the midst of this talk, Bell looked up and said, "But where is Arthur?"

"Oh," said the mother of the young man, "he went up to town this morning at eight. He took it for granted you would not start to-day."

"He might have waited to see," said Bell. "I suppose he is not so very much occupied in the Temple. It will serve him quite right if we go away before he comes back."

"But perhaps he won't come back," said Mrs. Ashburton gently.

Bell looked surprised, and then, with a little firmness about the mouth, held her peace for some time. It was clear that Master Arthur was not setting about the winning of this young woman in a very promising fashion.

When Bell next spoke she proposed that we should set out, rain or no rain. "It will not take much time to drive down to Henley," she said. "And if we begin by paying too much attention to slight showers, we shall never get on. Besides, Count von Rosen ought to see how fine are our English rain-landscapes—what softened colors are brought out in the trees and in the grays of the distance under a gloomy sky. It is not nearly so dismal as a wet day abroad in a level country, with nothing but rows of poplars along the horizon. Here," she said, turning to the lieutenant, "you have light mists hanging about the woods; and there is a gray, rough surface on the rivers; and all the hedges and fields get dark and intense; and a bit of scarlet—say a woman's cloak—is very fine under the gleam of the sky. I know you are

not afraid of wet, and I know that the rest of us never got into such good spirits during our Surrey drives as when we were dashing through torrents and shaking the rain from about our faces; and this is nothing—a mere passing shower—and the country down by Hounslow will look very well under dark clouds; and we cannot do better than start at once for Henley."

"What is the matter, Bell?" said my lady Titania, looking at the girl with her clear, observant eyes. "One would think you had got angry about our staying in Twickenham until to-morrow, and yet nobody has proposed it."

"I don't wish to waste time," said Bell, looking down.

Here the lieutenant laughed aloud. "Forgive me, mademoiselle," he said, "but what you say is very much like the English people. They are always much afraid of losing time, though it does not matter to them. I think your commercial habits have become national, and got amongst people who have nothing to do with commerce. I find English ladies who have weeks and months at their disposal travel all night by train, and make themselves very wretched. Why? To save a day, they tell you. I find English people, with two months' holiday before them, undertake all the un-comforts of a night-passage from Dover to Calais. Why? To save a day. How does it matter to you, for example, that we start to-day, or to-morrow, or next week? Only that you feel you must be doing something—you must accomplish something—you must save time. It is all English. It is with your amusements as with your making of money. You are never satisfied. You are always looking forward—wishing to do or have certain things—never content to stop and rest, and enjoy doing nothing."

Now what do you think our Bell did on being lectured in this fashion? Say something in reply, only kept from being saucy by the sweet manner of her saying it? or rise and leave the room, and refuse to be coaxed into a good humor for hours? Why, no. She said in the gentlest way, "I think you are quite right,

Count von Rosen. It really does not matter to me whether we go to-day or to-morrow."

"But you shall go to-day, Bell," say I, "even though it should rain Duke Georges. At four of the clock we start."

"My dear," says Tita, "this is absurd."

"Probably, but none the less Castor and Pollux start at that hour."

"You are beginning to show your authority early," says my lady, with a warning coldness in her tone.

"Such as there is left of it," I remark, looking at Bell, who describes a fight in the distance and is all attention.

"Count von Rosen," says Queen TITANIA, turning in her grandest manner to the young man, "what do you think of this piece of folly? It may clear up long before that: it may be raining heavily then. Why should we run the risk of incurring serious illness by determining to start at a particular hour? It is monstrous. It is absurd. It is—it is—"

"Well," said the lieutenant, with an easy shrug and a laugh, "it is not of much consequence you make the rule, for you will break it if it is not agreeable. For myself, I am accustomed to start at a particular hour, whatever happens; but for pleasure, what is the use?"

"Yes, what is the use?" repeats my lady, turning to the rest of us with a certain ill-concealed air of triumph.

"St. Augustine," I observed to this rebellious person, "remarks that the obedience of a wife to her husband is no virtue, so long as she does only that which is reasonable, just and pleasing to herself."

"I don't believe St. Augustine said anything of the kind," replied my lady; "and if he did, he hadn't a wife, and didn't know what he was talking about. I will not allow Bell to catch her death of cold. We shall *not* start at four."

"Two o'clock, luncheon. Half-past two, the moon enters Capricorn. Three o'clock, madness and rage. Four, colds attack the human race. We start at four."

By this time breakfast was over, and all the reply that my lady vouchsafed

was to wear a smile of defiance as she left the room. The count, too, went out, and in a few minutes we saw him in the road, leading the pony he had bought. The boys had been kept up stairs, and were told nothing of the surprise in store for them; so that there was likely to be a stirring scene in front of the doctor's house.

Presently the lieutenant arrived at the gate and summoned Bell from the window. She, having gone to the door and spoken to him for a second or two, went into the house, and reappeared with a bundle of coarse cloths. Was the foolish young man going to groom the pony in front of the house merely out of bravado? At all events, he roughly dried the shaggy coat of the sturdy little animal, and then carefully wiped the mud from its small legs and hoofs. Bell went down and took the bridle: the lieutenant was behind, to give a push if necessary.

"Come up, Dick! come along!" she said; and after a few frightened stumbles on the steps the pony stood in the doctor's hall!

The clatter of the small hoofs on the waxcloth had brought the boys out to the first landing, and they were looking down with intense surprise on the appearance of a live horse inside the house. When Bell had called them, and told them that the count had brought this pony for them, that it was a real pony, and that they would have to feed it every day, they came down the stairs with quite a frightened air. They regarded the animal from a distance, and then at last Master Jack ventured to go up and touch its neck.

"Why," he said, as if suddenly struck with the notion that it was really alive, "I'll get it an apple!"

He went up stairs, three steps at a bound, and by the time he came back Master Tom had got into the saddle, and was for riding his steed into the breakfast-room. Then he would ride him out into the garden. Jack insisted on his having the apple first. The mother of both called out from above that if they went into the garden in the rain, she

would have the whole house whipped. But all the same, Master Tom, led by the lieutenant and followed by Bell—whose attentions in holding him on he regarded with great dislike—rode in state along the passage, and through the kitchen, and out by a back door into the garden.

"Let me go, Auntie Bell!" he said, shaking himself free. "I can ride very well—I have ridden often at Leather-head."

"Off you go, then!" said the lieutenant. "Lean well back—don't kick him with your heels—off you go!"

The pony shook his rough little mane, and started upon a very sedate and patient walk along the smooth path.

"Fist! hei! go ahead!" cried Master Tom, and he twitched at the bridle in quite a knowing way.

Thus admonished, the pony broke into a brisk trot, which at first jogged Master Tom on to its neck, but he managed to wriggle back into the saddle and get hold of the reins again. His riding was not a masterly performance, but at all events he stuck on, and when, after having trotted thrice round the garden, he slid off of his own will and brought the pony up to us, his chubby round face was gleaming with pride and flushed color and rain. Then it was Jack's turn, but this young gentleman, having had less experience, was attended by the lieutenant, who walked round the garden with him and gave him his first lessons in the art of horsemanship. This was a very pretty amusement for those of us who remained under the archway, but for those in the garden it was beginning to prove a trifle damp. Nevertheless, Bell begged hard for the boys to be let alone, seeing that they were overjoyed beyond expression by their new toy; and it is probable that both they and their instructor would have got soaked to the skin had not my lady Titania appeared with her face full of an awful wrath.

What occurred then it is difficult to relate, for in the midst of the storm Bell laughed, and the boys, being deprived of their senses by the gift of the pony,

laughed also—at their own mother! Tita fell from her high estate directly. The splendors of her anger faded away from her face, and she ran out into the rain and cuffed the boys' ears, and kissed them, and drove them into the house before her. And she was so good as to thank the count formally for his present, and bade the boys be good boys and attend to their lessons, when they had so much amusement provided for them; and finally turned to Bell, and said that, as we had to start at four o'clock, we might as well have our things packed before luncheon.

Now, such was the reward of this wifely obedience that at four o'clock the rain had actually and definitely ceased, and the clouds, though they still hung low, were gathering themselves up into distinct forms. When the phaeton was brought round there was not even any necessity for putting up the hood; and Queen Titania, having seen that everything was placed in the vehicle, was graciously pleased to ask the lieutenant if he would drive, that she might sit beside him and point out objects of interest.

"She takes good care," thought one of the party, "that our young Uhlan shall not have Bell for a companion, especially in dull weather, when the hood might have to be put up and the young folks removed from the supervision of their elders."

Queen Tita kissed the boys very affectionately, and bade them take care not to tumble off the pony. The doctor and his wife wished us every good fortune. Bell threw a last glance up and down the road—why?—and then turned her face a little aside. The count shook the reins, and our phaeton rolled slowly away from Twickenham.

"Why, Bell," I said, as we were crossing the railway bridge, and my companion looked round to see if there were a train at the station, "you have been crying!"

"No wonder," said Bell, frankly, but in a very low voice.

"But why?" I asked.

"You know," she said.

"I know that a very foolish and ungrateful young man has willfully picked a quarrel with a very nice young lady, and I know what I think of the whole transaction, and what I consider he deserves. But I didn't think you cared for him so much, Bell, or were so vexed about it."

"Care for him!" she said, with a glance at the people before us, lest the low sound of her voice might not be entirely drowned by the noise of the wheels in the muddy road. "That may mean anything or nothing. I like Arthur very well, that is all; and—and I am afraid he is vexed with me; and it is not pleasant to part like that with one's friends."

"He will write to you, Bell, or he will drop down on us suddenly some evening when we are at Oxford, or Worcester, or Shrewsbury—"

"I hope he will do nothing of the kind," said Bell, with some expression of alarm. "There would be a scene, I know, and something dreadful would happen."

"But Master Arthur, Bell, is not exactly the sort of person to displace the geological strata, or even frighten a sensible young woman out of her wits."

"Oh, you don't know what a temper he has at times," she said; and then, suddenly recovering herself, she added hastily, "but he is very good and kind, for all that; only he is vexed, you know, at not being able to get on; and he is jealous of people who are successful and in good circumstances and independent; and he is apt to think that—that—that—"

"His lady-love will be carried off by some wealthy suitor before he has been able to amass a fortune. No, Bell: you will not be won by money, but you might be driven away by ill-usage."

"But you mustn't talk as if I were engaged to Arthur Ashburton," said Bell, rather proudly, "or even that I am ever likely to be."

Our bonny Bell soon recovered her spirits, for she felt that we had at last really set out on our journey to Scotland, and her keen liking for all out-of-door sights and sounds was now heightened

by a vague and glad anticipation. As we drove through the narrow lane running down by Whitton Park and Whitton Dean, the warm, moist winds were blowing a dozen odors about from the far, low-stretching fields and gardens, and the prevailing sweetness of the air seemed to herald our departure from the last suburban traces of London. Splash! went the horses' hoofs into the yellow pools of the roads, and the rattle of the wheels seemed to send our echo through the stillness of the quiet countryside; while overhead the dark and level clouds became more fixed and gray, and we hoped they would ultimately draw together and break, so as to give us a glimpse of pallid sunshine. Then we drove up through Hounslow to the famous inn at the cross-roads which was known to travelers in the highway-robbery days; and here our Bell complained that so many of these hostelries should bear her name. Queen Titania, we could hear, was telling her companion of all the strange incidents connected with this inn and its neighborhood which she could recall from the pages of those various old-fashioned fictions which are much more interesting to some folks than the most accurate histories. Up this long and level Bath road, which now lay before us, had come many a gay and picturesque party whose adventures were recorded in the olden time. Was it not here that Strap rode up to the coach in which Roderick Random was going to Bath, and alarmed everybody by the intelligence that two horsemen were coming over the heath upon them? and was it not to this very village that the frightened servant hastened to get assistance? When Sophia escaped from the various adventures that befell her in the inn at Upton, did she not come up this very road to London, making the journey in two days? When Peregrine Pickle used to pay forbidden visits to London, doubtless he rode through Hounslow at dead of night on each occasion; and it is needless to say that once upon a time a youth called Humphrey Clinker acted as postilion to Matt Bramble and Tabitha and Miss Liddy when they, having dined at

Salt Hill, were passing through Hounslow to London and to Scotland. These and a hundred other reminiscences, not unfamiliar to the lieutenant, who had a fair knowledge of English novels, were being recorded by Queen Titania as we bowled along the Bath road, over Cranford Bridge, past the Magpies, through Colnbrook, and on to Langley Marsh, when the count suddenly exclaimed, "But the heath? I have not seen Hounslow Heath, where the highwaymen used to be!"

Alas! there was no more heath to show him—only the level and wooded beauties of a cultivated English plain. And yet these, as we saw them then, under the conditions that Bell had described in the morning, were sufficiently pleasant to see. All around us stretched a fertile landscape, with the various greens of its trees and fields and hedges grown dark and strong under the gloom of the sky. The winding road ran through this country like the delicate gray streak of a river; and there were distant farmhouses peeping from the sombre foliage, an occasional wayside inn standing deserted amid its rude outhouses, a passing tramp plodding through the mire. Strange and sweet came the damp, warm winds from over the fields of beans and of clover, and it seemed as if the wild roses in the tall and straggling hedges had increased in multitude, so as to perfume the whole land. And then, as we began to see in the west, with a great joy, some faint streaks of sunshine descend like a shimmering comb upon the gloomy landscape, lo! in the south there arose before us a great and stately building, whose tall gray towers and spacious walls, seen against the dark clouds of the horizon, were distant and pale and spectral.

"It looks like a phantom castle, does it not?" said Bell, regarding the distant building with rapt and wistful eyes, and speaking in quite a low voice. "Don't you think it has sprung up in the heavens like the *Fata Morgana* or the spectral ship, and that it will fade away and disappear? How pale and shadowy it is!"

Indeed, it looked like the ghost of one of the castles of King Arthur's time—that old, strange time when England lay

steeped in gray mists and the fogs blown about by the sea winds, when there does not seem to have been any sunshine, but only a gloom of shifting vapors, half hiding the ghostly knights and the shadowy queens, and all their faint and mystical stories and pilgrimages and visions. The castle down there looked as if it had never been touched by sharp, clear, modern sunshine, that is cruel to ghosts and phantoms.

But here Bell's reveries were interrupted by Lieutenant von Rosen, who, catching sight of the castle in the south, and all its hazy lines of forest, said, "Ah, what is that?"

"That," said Bell, suddenly recovering from her trance, "is a hotel for German princes."

She had no sooner uttered the words, however, than she looked thoroughly alarmed, and with a prodigious shame and mortification she begged the count's pardon, who merely laughed, and said he regretted he was not staying there.

"It is Windsor, is it not?" he said.

"Yes," replied Bell humbly, while her face was still pained and glowing. "I—I hope you will forgive my rudeness: I think I must have heard some one say that recently, and it escaped me before I thought what it meant."

Of course the lieutenant passed the matter off lightly as a very harmless saying, but all the same Bell seemed determined for some time after to make him amend, and quite took away Queen Tita's occupation by pointing out to our young Uhlan, in a very respectful and submissive manner, whatever she thought of note on the way. Whether the young Uhlan perceived this intention or not, I do not know, but at all events he took enormous pains to be interested in what she said, and paid far more attention to her than to his own companion. Moreover, he once or twice, in looking back, pretty nearly ran us into a cart, inso-much that Queen Tita had laughingly to recall him to his duties.

In this wise we went down through the sweetly-smelling country, with its lines of wood and hedge and its breadths of field and meadow still suffering from

the gloom of a darkened sky. We cut through the village of Slough, passed the famous Salt Hill, got over the Two-Mill Brook at Cuckfield Bridge, and were rapidly nearing Maidenhead, where we proposed to rest an hour or two and dine. Bell had pledged her word there would be a bright evening, and had thrown out vague hints about a boating-excursion up to the wooded heights of Cliefden. In the mean time, the sun had made little way in breaking through the clouds. There were faint indications here and there of a luminous grayish-yellow lying in the interstices of the heavy sky, but the pale and shimmering comb in the west had disappeared.

"What has come over your fine weather, Bell?" said Queen Titania. "Do you remember how you used to dream of our setting out, and what heaps of color and sunshine you lavished on your picture?"

"My dear," said Bell, "you are unacquainted with the art of a stage-manager. Do you think I would begin my pantomime with a blaze of light, and bright music, and a great show of costume? No! First of all comes the dungeon scene—darkness and gloom, thunder and solemn music, nothing but demons appearing through the smoke—and then, when you have all got impressed and terrified and attentive, you will hear in the distance a little sound of melody, there will be a flutter of wings, just as if the fairies were preparing a surprise, and then all at once into the darkness leaps the queen herself, and a blaze of sunlight dashes on to her silver wings, and you see her gauzy costume, and the scarlet and gold of a thousand attendants who have all swarmed into the light."

"How long have we to wait, mademoiselle?" said the lieutenant, seriously.

"I have not quite settled that," replied Bell, with a fine air of reflection, "but I will see about it while you are having dinner."

Comforted by these promises—which ought, however, to have come from Queen Titania, if the fairies were supposed to be invoked—we drove underneath the railway-line and past the sta-

tion of Maidenhead, and so forward to the hotel by the bridge. When, having, with some exercise of patience, seen Castor and Pollux housed and fed, I went into the parlor, I found dinner on the point of being served, and the count grown almost eloquent about the comforts of English inns. Indeed, there was a considerable difference, as he pointed out, between the hard, bright, cheery public-room of a German inn, and this long, low-roofed apartment, with its old-fashioned furniture, its carpets, and general air of gravity and respectability. Then the series of pictures around the walls—venerable lithographs, glazed and yellow, representing all manner of wild adventures in driving and hunting—amused him much. "That is very like your English humor," he said—"of the country, I mean. The joke is a man thrown into a ditch, and many horses coming over on him; or it is a carriage upset in the road, and men crawling from underneath, and women trying to get through the window. It is rough, strong, practical fun, at the expense of unfortunate people. You like—"

"At least," I point out, "it is quite as good a sort of public-house furniture as pictures of bleeding saints or smooth lithographs of wooden-headed princes."

"Oh, I do not object to it," he said—"not in the least. I do like your sporting pictures very much."

"And when you talk of German lithographs," struck in Bell, quite warmly, "I suppose you know that it is to the German printsellers our poorer classes owe all the possession of art they can afford. They would never have a picture in their house but for those cheap lithographs that come over from Germany; and although they are very bad, and even carelessly bad often, they are surely better than nothing for cottages and country inns, that would never otherwise have anything to show but coarse patterns of wall-paper.

"My dear child," remarked Queen Tita, "we are none of us accusing Germany of any crime whatever."

"But it is very good-natured of made-

moiselle to defend my country, for all that," said the lieutenant with a smile. "We are unpopular with you just now, I believe. That I cannot help. It is a pity. But it is only a family quarrel, you know, and it will go away. And just now it requires some courage—does it not?—to say a word for Germany."

"Why, Bell has been your bitterest enemy all through the war!" said Tita, ashamed of the defection of her ancient ally.

"I think you behaved very badly to the poor French people," said Bell, looking down, and evidently wishing that some good spirit or bad one would fly away with this embarrassing topic.

The spirit appeared. There came to the open space in front of the inn a young girl of about fifteen or sixteen, with a careworn and yet healthily-colored face, and shrewd blue eyes. She wore a man's jacket, and she had a shillelagh in her hand, which she twirled about as she glanced at the windows of the inn. Then, in a hard, cracked voice, she began to sing a song. It was supposed to be rather a dashing and aristocratic ballad, in which this oddly-clad girl with the shillelagh recounted her experiences of the opera, and told us how she loved champagne and croquet, and various other fashionable diversions. There was something very curious in the forced gayety with which she entered into these particulars, the shillelagh meanwhile being kept as still as circumstances would permit. But presently she sang an Irish song, describing herself as some free-and-easy Irish lover and fighter; and here the bit of wood came into play. She thrust one of her hands, with an audacious air, into the pocket of the jacket she wore, while she twirled the shillelagh with the other; and then, so soon as she had finished, her face dropped into a plaintive and matter-of-fact air, and she came forward to receive pence.

"She is scarcely our Lorelei," said the count, "who sits over the Rhine in the evening, and lets her jewels flash in the sunlight, and steals the hearts of the fishermen with her singing. But she is

a hard-working girl, you can see that. She has not much pleasure in life. If we give her a shilling, it will be much comfort to her."

And with that he went out. But what was Queen Tita's surprise to see him go up to the girl and begin to talk to her! She, looking up to the big, brown-bearded man with a sort of awe, answered his questions with some appearance of shamefaced embarrassment, and then, when he gave her a piece of money, she performed something like a curtsy, and looked after him as he returned whistling to the door of the inn.

Then we had dinner—a plain, comfortable, wholesome meal enough; and it seemed somehow in this old-fashioned parlor that we formed quite a family party. We were cut off at last from the world of friends and acquaintances, and thrown upon each other's society in a very peculiar fashion. In what manner should we sit down to our final repast after all this journey and its perils and accidents were over? Tita, I could see, was rather grave, and perhaps speculating on the future; while Bell and the young lieutenant had got to talk of some people they recollected as living at Bonn some dozen years before. Nobody said a word about Arthur.

CHAPTER V.

QUEEN TITANIA AFLOAT.

Say, Father Thames, for thou hast seen
Full many a sprightly race,
Disporting on thy margin green,
The paths of pleasure trace,
Who foremost now delight to cleave
With pliant arm thy glassy wave.

At length we hit upon one thing that Count von Rosen could not do. When we had wandered down to the side of the Thames, just by Maidenhead Bridge, and opposite the fine old houses and smooth lawns and green banks that stand on the other margin of the broad and shallow river, we discovered that the lieutenant was of no use in a boat. And so, as the young folks would have us go up under the shadows of the leafy hills of Cliefden, there was nothing for it but that Tita and I should resort to the habits of earlier

years, and show a later generation how to feather an oar with skill and dexterity. As Queen Titania stood by the boat-nouse, pulling off her gloves with economic forethought, and looking rather pensively at the landing-place and the boats and the water, she suddenly said, "Is not this like long ago?"

"You talk like an old woman, Tita," said one of the party. "And yet your eyes are as pretty as they were a dozen years ago, when you used to walk along the beach at Eastbourne and cry because you were afraid of becoming the mistress of a house. And now the house has been too much for you; and you are full of confused facts and unintelligible figures and petty anxieties, until your responsibilities have hidden away the old tenderness of your look, except at such a moment as this, when you forget yourself. Ah, Tita, do you remember who pricked her finger to sign a document in her own blood when she was only a school-girl, and who produced it years afterward with something of a shamefaced pride?"

"Stuff!" said Tita angrily, but blushing dreadfully all the same; and so, with a frown and an imperious manner, she stepped down to the margin of the river.

Now mark this circumstance. In the old days of which my lady was then thinking, she used to be very well content with pulling bow-*oar* when we two used to go out in the evenings. Now, when the lieutenant and Bell had been comfortably placed in the stern, Tita daintily stepped into the boat and sat down quite naturally to pull stroke. She made no apology. She took the place as if it were hers by right. Such are the changes which a few years of married life produce!

So Bell pulled the white tiller-ropes over her shoulder, and we glided out and over the glassy stream, into that world of greenness and soft sounds and sweet odors that lay all around. Already something of Bell's prophecy was likely to come true, for the clouds were perceptibly growing thinner overhead, and a diffused yellow light, falling from no particular place, seemed to dwell over

the hanging woods of Cliefden. It gave a new look, too, to the smooth river, to the rounded elms and tall poplars on the banks, and the long aits beyond the bridge, where the swans were sailing close in by the reeds.

We had got but a short way up the river when our coxswain, without a word of warning, shot us into a half-submerged forest that seemed to hide from us a lake on the other side. Tita had so little time to ship her oar that no protest was possible; and then the lieutenant, catching hold of the branches, pulled us through the narrow channel, and lo! we were in a still piece of water, with a smooth curve of the river-bank on one side and a long island on the other, and with a pretty little house looking quietly down at us over this inland sea. We were still in the Thames, but this house seemed so entirely to have become owner of the charming landscape around and its stretch of water in front that Bell asked in a hurry how we could get away. Tita, being still a little indignant, answered not, but put her oar into the outrigger again and commenced pulling. And then our coxswain, who was not so familiar with the tricks of the Thames at Maidenhead as some of us, discovered a north-west passage by which it was possible to return into the main channel of the stream, and we continued our voyage.

When, at length, we had got past the picturesque old mill, and reached the sea of tumbling white water that came rushing down from the weir, it seemed as though the sky had entered into a compact with Bell to fulfill her predictions. For as we lay and rocked in the white surge—watching the long level line of foam come tumbling over in spouts and jets and white masses, listening to the roar of the fall being echoed in the woods around, and regarding the swirling circles of white bells that swept away downward on the smooth surface of the stream—there appeared in the west, just over the line of the weir, a parallel line of dark blood-red. It was but a streak as yet, cleaving the sombre masses of cloud that lay along the horizon, but presently it widened and grew more in-

tense, a great glow of crimson color came shining forth, and it seemed as if all the western heavens, just over that level line of white foam, were becoming a mass of fire. Bell's transformation-scene was positively blinding, and the bewilderment of the splendid colors was not lessened by the roar of the tumbling river, that seemed strangely loud and wild in the stillness of the evening.

But when we turned to drop quietly down stream, the scene around was so lovely that Queen Titania had no heart to pull away from it. For now the hanging woods of beech and birch and oak had caught a glow of the sunset along their masses of yellow and green, and the broad stream had the purple of its glassy sweeps dashed here and there with red, and in the far east a reflected tinge of pink mingled with the cold green, and lay soft and pure and clear over the low woods and the river and the bridge. As if by magic, the world had grown suddenly light, ethereal and full of beautiful colors, and the clouds that still remained overhead had parted into long cirrous lines, with pearly edges and a touch of scarlet and gold along their western side.

"What a drive we shall have this evening!" cried Bell. "It will be a clear night when we get to Henley, and there will be stars over the river, and perhaps a moon—who knows?"

"I thought you would have provided a moon, mademoiselle," said the lieutenant. "You have done very well for us this evening—oh, very well, indeed. I have not seen any such beautiful picture for many years. You did very well to keep a dark day all day, and make us tired of cold colors and green trees; and then you surprise us by this picture of magic—oh, it is very well done."

"All that it wants," said Bell, with a critical eye, "is a little woman in a scarlet shawl under the trees there, and over the green of the rushes—one of those nice fat little women who always wear bright shawls, just to please landscape painters—making a little blob of strong color, you know, just like a lady-bird among green moss. Do you know,

I am quite grateful to a pleasant little countrywoman when she dresses herself ridiculously merely to make a landscape look fine; and how can you laugh at her when she comes near? I some times think that she wears those colors especially those in her bonnet, out of mere modesty. She does not know what will please you: she puts in a little of everything to give you a choice. She holds up to you a whole bouquet of flowers, and says, 'Please, miss, do you like blue?—for here is corncockle; or red?—for here are poppies; or yellow?—for here are rock-roses.' She is like Perdita, you know, going about with an armful of blossoms, and giving to every one what she thinks will please them."

"My dear," said Tita, "you are too generous: the woman wears those things out of vanity. She does not know what color suits her complexion best, and so wears a variety, quite sure that one of them must be the right one. And there are plenty of women in town, as well as in the country, who do that too."

"I hope you don't mean me," said Bell contritely as she leant her arm over the side of the boat and dipped the tips of her fingers into the glassy stream.

But if we were to get to Henley that night, there was no time for lingering longer about that bend by the river, with its islands and mills and woods. That great burst of color in the west had been the expiring effort of the sun, and when we got back to the inn there was nothing left in the sky but the last golden and crimson traces of his going down. The river was becoming gray, and the Cliefden woods were preparing for the night by drawing over themselves a thin veil of scarcely-perceptible mist, which rendered them misty and shadowy as they lay under the lambent sky.

The phaeton was at the door, our bill paid, an extra rug got out of the imperial; although in that operation the lieutenant nearly succeeded in smashing Bell's guitar.

"It will be dark before we get to Henley," says Tita.

"Yes," I answer obediently.

"And we are going now by cross-roads," she remarks.

"The road is a very good one," I venture to reply.

"But still it is a cross-road," she says, with something of decision in her voice.

"Very well, then, my dear," I say, wondering what the little woman is after.

"You must drive," she continues, "for none of us know the road."

"Yes, m'm, please m'm: any more orders?"

"Oh, Bell," says my lady with a gracious air (she can change the expression of her face in a second), "would you mind taking Count von Rosen under your charge until we get to Henley? I am afraid it will take both of us to find the road in the dark."

"No, I will take you under my charge, mademoiselle," said the count frankly; and therewith he helped Bell into the phaeton, and followed himself.

The consequence of this little arrangement was, that while Tita and I were in front, the young folks were behind; and no sooner had we started from the inn, got across the bridge, and were going down the road toward the village of Maidenhead proper, than Titania says, in a very low voice, "Do you know, my dear, our pulling together in that boat quite brought back old times; and—and—and I wanted to be sitting up here beside you for a while, just to recall the old, old drives we used to have, you know, about here and Henley and Reading. How long ago is it, do you think?"

That wife of mine is a wonderful creature. You would have thought she was as innocent as a lamb when she uttered these words, looking up with a world of sincerity and pathos in the big, clear, earnest brown eyes. And the courage of the small creature, too, who thought she could deceive her husband by this open, transparent, audacious piece of hypocrisy!

"Madame," I said, with some care that the young folks should not overhear, "your tenderness overwhelms me."

"What do you mean?" she says, suddenly becoming as cold and as rigid as Lot's wife after the accident happened.

"Perhaps," I ventured to suggest, "you would like to have the hood up, and so leave them quite alone? Our presence must be very embarrassing."

"You are insulting Bell in saying such things," she says warmly; "or perhaps it is that you would rather have her for a companion than your own wife."

"Well, to tell you the truth, I would."

"She shall not sit by the lieutenant again."

"I hope you don't mean to strangle her. We should arrive in Edinburgh in a sort of unicorn-fashion."

Tita relaxed into a dignified silence—that is always the way with her when she has been found out—but she was probably satisfied by hearing the count and Bell chatting very briskly together, thus testifying to the success of her petty stratagem.

It was a pleasant drive, on that quiet evening, from Maidenhead across the wild, untenanted country that lies within the great curve of the Thames. Instead of turning off at the corner of Stubbing's Heath, and so getting into the road that runs by Hurley Bottom, we held straight on toward Wargrave, so as to have the last part of the journey lead us up by the side of the river. So still it was! The road led through undulating stretches of common and past the edges of silent woods, while the sky was becoming pale and beautiful overhead, and the heights on the northern horizon, between Cookham and Hurley, were growing more and more visionary in the dusk. Sometimes, but rarely, we met a solitary wanderer coming along through the twilight, and a gruff "good-night" greeted us; but for the most part there seemed no life in this lonely part of the country, where rabbits ran across the road in front of us, and the last rooks that flew by in the dusk seemed hastening on to the neighborhood of some distant village. It was a mild, fresh evening, with the air still damp and odorous after the rain, but overhead the sky still remained clear, and here and there, in the partings of the thin cloud, a pale star or planet had become faintly visible.

At last we got down into the village of

Wargrave, and then it was nearly dark. There were a few people, mostly women, standing at the doors of the cottages, and here and there a ray of yellow light gleamed out from a small window. As we struck into the road that runs parallel with the Thames there were men coming home from their work, and their talk was heard at a great distance in the stillness of the night.

"How far are we from Henley?" said Bell.

"Are you anxious to get there?" replied Queen Titania, smiling quite benignly.

"No," said Bell: "this is so pleasant that I should like to go driving on until midnight, and we could see the moon coming through the trees."

"You have to consider the horses," said the lieutenant bluntly. "If you do tire them too much on the first days, they will not go so long a journey. But yet we are some way off, I suppose, and if mademoiselle will sing something for us, I will get out the guitar."

"You'd better get down and light the lamps, rather," I remark to those indolent young people; whereupon the count was instantly in the road, striking wax matches, and making use of curious expressions that seemed chiefly to consist of *g*'s and *r*'s.

So, with the lamps flaring down the dark road, we rolled along the highway that here skirts the side of a series of heights looking down into the Thames. Sometimes we could see a gray glimmer of the river beneath us through the trees; at other times the road took us down close to the side of the water, and Castor got an opportunity of making a playful little shy or two; but for the most part we drove through the dense woods, that completely shut off the starlight overhead.

More than once, indeed, we came to a steep descent that was buried in such total darkness that the lieutenant jumped down and took the horses' heads, lest some unlucky step or stumble should throw us into the river. So far as we could make out, however, there was a sufficient wall on the side of the highway

next the stream—a rough old wall, covered with plants and moss, that ran along the high and wooded bank.

Suddenly Bell uttered a cry of delight. We had come to a cleft in the glade which showed us the river running by some sixty feet beneath us, and on the surface of the water the young crescent of the moon was clearly mirrored. There was not enough moonlight to pierce the trees, or even to drown the pale light of the stars, but the sharp disk of silver, as it glimmered on the water, was sufficiently beautiful, and contained in itself the promise of many a lovely night.

"It has begun the journey with us," said Bell. "It is a young moon: it will go with us all the month, and we shall see it on the Severn, and on Windermere, and on the Solway, and on the Tweed. Didn't I promise you all a moon, sooner or later? And there it is!"

"It does not do us much good, Bell," said the driver ruefully, the very horses seeming afraid to plunge into the gulfs of darkness that were spectrally peered into by the light of the lamps.

"The moon is not for use," said Bell, "it is for magic; and once we have got to Henley, and put the horses up, and gone out again to the river, you shall all stand back and watch in a corner, and let Queen Titania go forward to summon the fairies. And as you listen in the dark, you will hear a little crackling and rustling along the opposite shore, and you will see small blue lights come out from the banks, and small boats, with a glowworm at their prow, come out into the stream. And then from the boats and from all the fields near—where the mist of the river lies at night—you will see wonderful small men and women of radiant blue flame come forward, and there will be a strange sound like music in the trees, and the river itself will begin to say, in a kind of laugh, 'Titania, Titania! you have been so long away—years and years—looking after servants, and the schooling of boys, and the temper of a fractious husband—'"

"Bell, you are impertinent."

"There are true words spoken in jest,

sometimes," says Queen Titania with a dainty malice.

"Your bearing-rein in England is a cruelty to the horses: you must take it away to-morrow," said the lieutenant; and this continuation of a practical subject recalled these scapegraces from their jibes.

Here the road took us down by a gradual dip to the river again, and for the last mile before reaching our destination we had a pleasant and rapid run along the side of the stream. Then the lights of Henley were seen to glimmer before us: we crossed over the bridge, and swerving round to the right, drove into the archway of the "Red Lion."

"No, sir," remarked Dr. Johnson to Mr. Boswell, "there is nothing which has yet been contrived by man by which so much happiness is produced as by a good tavern or inn." He then repeated, with great emotion, we are told, Shenstone's lines—

Who'er has traveled life's dull round,
Where'er his stages may have been,
May sigh to think he still has found
The warmest welcome at an inn.

And Mr. Boswell goes on to say: "We happened to lie this night at the inn at Henley where Shenstone wrote these lines." Now, surely, if ever belated travelers had reason to expect a cordial welcome, it was we four as we drove into the famous hostelry which had awakened enthusiasm in the poets and lexicographers of bygone days. But as Castor and Pollux stood under the archway, looking into the great dark yard before them, and as we gazed round in vain for the appearance of any waiter or other official, it occurred to Tita that the Bell Inn must have changed hands since Shenstone's time. Where was our comfortable welcome? A bewildered maid-servant came out to stare at our phaeton with some alarm. Plaintive howls for the ostler produced a lad from the darkness of the stables, who told us that the ostler was away somewhere. Another maid-servant came out, and also looked alarmed. The present writer, fearing that Tony Lumpkin, transformed into an invisible spirit, had played him a

trick, humbly begged this young woman to say whether he had driven by mistake to a private house. The young person looked afraid.

"My good girl," says Tita, with a gracious condescension, "will you tell us if this is the Bell Inn?"

"Yes, 'm—of course, 'm."

"And can we stay here to-night?"

"I'll bring the waiter, ma'am, directly."

Meanwhile, the lieutenant had got down, and was fuming about the yard to rout out the ostler's assistants, or some people who could put up the horses. He managed to uncarth no fewer than three men, whom he brought in a gang. He was evidently determined not to form his grooming of the horses at Twickenham into a precedent.

At last there came a waiter, looking rather sleepy and a trifle helpless; whereupon my lady and Bell departed into the inn, and left the luggage to be sent after them. There appeared to be no one inside the great house. The gas was lit in the spacious coffee-room; some rugs and bags were brought in and placed on the table; and then Tita and her companion, not daring to remove their bonnets, sat down in arm-chairs and stared at each other.

I fly from pomp, I fly from plate;
I fly from falsehood's specious grin;
But risk a ten times worses fate
In choosing lodgings at an inn.

This was what Bell repeated, in a gentle voice, on the very spot that is sacred to the memory of Shenstone's satisfaction.

I requested the young man in the white tie to assign some reason for this state of affairs; and his answer was immediately forthcoming. There had been a regatta a few days before. The excitement in the small town, and more especially in the Bell, had been dreadful. Now a reaction had set in: Henley and the Bell were alike deserted, and we were the victims of a collapse. I complimented the waiter on his philosophical acumen, and went out to see what had befallen Count von Rosen and the horses.

I found him standing in a stable that was dimly lighted by a solitary candle stuck against the wall, superintending

the somewhat amateurish operations of the man who had undertaken to supply the ostler's place. The lieutenant had evidently not been hectoring his companions: on the contrary, he was on rather good terms with them, and was making inquiries about the familiar English names for chopped hay and other luxuries of the stable. He was examining the corn, too, and pronouncing opinions on the split beans which he had ordered. On the whole, he was satisfied with the place, although he expressed his surprise that the ostler of so big an inn should be absent.

When at length we had seen each of the horses supplied with an ample feed, fresh straw and plenty of hay, the men were turned out and the stable-door locked. He allowed them on this occasion to retain the key. As we crossed the yard, a rotund, frank, cheery-looking man appeared, who was presumably the ostler. He made a remark or two, but the night air was chill.

"Now," said the count when we got into the big parlor, "we have to make ourselves pleasant and comfortable. I do think we must all drink whisky. For myself, I do not like the taste very much, but it looks very comfortable to see some people with steaming glasses before them. And I have brought out mademoiselle's guitar, and she will sing us some songs."

"But you must also," says Bell, looking down.

"Oh, a hundred! a thousand! as many as you like!" he said; and then, with a sort of sigh, he took his cigar-case out of his pocket and laid it pathetically on the mantelpiece. There was an air of renunciation in his face. Then he rang the bell, and the waiter was asked to bring us certain liquors which, although not exclusively whisky, could be drank in those steaming tumblers which the count loved to see.

Oh, come you from Newcastle?—

this was what Bell sang, with the blue ribbon of her guitar slung round her neck—

Oh, come you from Newcastle?
Come you not thereaway?
And did you meet my true love,
Riding on a bonny bay?

And as she sang, with her eyes cast down, the count seemed to be regarding her face with a peculiar interest. He forgot to lift the hot tumbler that was opposite him on the table—he had even forgotten Tita's gracious permission that he might have a cigar—he was listening and gazing merely, in a blank silence. And when she had finished, he eagerly begged her to sing another of the old English songs. And she sang—

O mistress mine, where are you roaming?
O mistress mine, where are you roaming?
Oh stay and hear, your true love's coming,
That can sing both high and low.

And when she had finished he once more eagerly begged her to sing another of those old songs; and then all of a sudden, catching sight of a smile on my lady's face, he stopped and apologized, and blushed rather, and said it was too bad—that he had forgotten, and would himself try something on the guitar.

When at length the women had gone up stairs, he fetched down his cigar from the mantelpiece, lit it, stretched out his long legs, and said, "How very English she is!"

"She? who?"

"Why, your Miss Bell. I do like to hear her talk of England as if she had a pride in it, and mention the names of towns as if she loved them because they were English, and speak of the fairies and stories as if she was familiar with them because they belong to her own country. You can see how she is fond of everything that is like old times—an old house, an old mile-stone, an old bridge—everything that is peculiar and old and English. And then she sings, oh so very well—so very well indeed; and these old songs, about English places and English customs of village-life, they seem to suit her very well, and you think she herself is the heroine of them. But as for that young man in Twickenham, he is a very pitiful fellow."

"How have you suddenly come to that conclusion?" I inquire of our lieutenant, who is lazily letting the cigar-smoke curl about his moustache and beard as he lies back and fixes his light blue eyes contemplatively on the ceiling.

"How do I know? I do not know: I think so. He ought to be very well satisfied of knowing a young lady like that, and very proud of going to marry her, instead of annoying her with bad tempers."

"That is true. Young men under such circumstances cannot be too grateful or too amiable. They are not always so, however. You yourself, for example, when you parted from Fräulein Fallersleben—"

Here the lieutenant jumped up in his chair, and said, with an unnecessary vehemence, "Donnerwetter! look at the provocation I had! It was not my ill-temper: I am not more ill-tempered than other men; but when you know you mean very well, and that you treat a woman as perhaps not all men would be inclined to do in the same case, and she is a hypocrite, and she pretends much, and at the same time she is writing to you, she is— Pfui! I cannot speak of it!"

"You were very fond of her."

"Worse luck."

"And you had a great fight, and used hard words to each other, and parted so that you would rather meet Beelzebub than her."

"Why, yes, it is so: I would rather meet twenty Beelzebubs than her."

"That is the way of you boys. You don't know that in after years, when all these things have got smooth and misty and distant, you will come to like her again; and then what will you think of your hard words and your quarrels? If your children could only understand how very short youth is, how very long middle age is, and how inexpressibly dull old age is—if you could only understand how the chief occupation of the longer half of your life is looking back on the first short half of it—you would know the value of storing up only pleasant recollections of all your old friends. If you find that your sweetheart is a woman compelled by her nature to fall in love with the man nearest her, and forget him who is out of the way, why devote her to the infernal gods? In after years you will be grateful to her for the

pleasant days and weeks you spent with her, when you were both happy together, and you will look back on the old times very tenderly; and then, on those occasions when you German folks drink to the health of your absent dear ones, won't you be sorry that you can't include her who was dear enough to you in your youth?"

"That is very good, it is quite true," said the count, in almost an injured tone, as if Fräulein Fallersleben were responsible.

"Look for a moment," I say to my pensive pupil, "at the pull a man has who has spent his youth in pleasant scenery. When he gets old, and can do nothing but live the old life over again by looking back, he has only to shut his eyes, and his brain is full of fresh and bright pictures of the old times in the country; and the commonest landscape of his youth he will remember then as if it were steeped in sunlight."

"That is quite true," said Von Rosen, thoughtfully, but the next moment he uttered an angry exclamation, started up from his chair, and began walking up and down the room. "It is all very well," he said, with an impatient vehemence, "to be amiable and forgiving when you are old—because you don't care about it, that is the reason. When you are young you expect fair play. Do you think if I should be seventy I will care one brass farthing whether Pauline—that is, Fräulein Fallersleben—was honest or no? I will laugh at the whole affair then. But now, when you are ashamed of the deceit of a woman, is it not right you tell her? Is it not right she knows what honest men and women think of her? What will she think of you if you say to her, 'Farewell, Fräulein. You have behaved not very well, but I am amiable: I will forgive you'?"

"There, again: you parted with her in wrath, because you did not like to appear weak and complaisant in her eyes."

"At all events, I said what I felt," said the lieutenant, warmly. "I do think it is only hypocrisy and selfishness to say, 'I hate this woman, but I will be

kind to her, because when I grow old I will look back and consider myself to have been very good."

"You have been deeply hit, my poor lad: you are quite fevered about it now. You cannot even see how a man's own self-respect will make him courteous to a woman whom he despises; and is he likely to be sorry for that courtesy when he looks at it in cold blood, and recognizes the stupendous fact that the man who complains of the inconsistency of a woman utters a reflection against Providence?"

"But you don't know—you don't know," said the count, pitching his cigar into the grate, "what a woman this one showed herself to be. After all, it does not matter. But when I look at such a woman as your Miss Bell here—"

"Yes, when you look at her?"

"Why, I see the difference," said the lieutenant, gloomily; and therewith he puffed out another cigar.

I stopped this, however, and rang for candles. As he lit his in rather a melancholy fashion, he said, "It is a very good thing to see a woman like that—young-hearted, frank, honest in her eyes, and full of pleasantness, too, and good spirits—oh, it is very fine, indeed, merely to look at her; for you do believe that she is a very good girl, and you think there are good women in the world. But as for that young man at Twickenham—"

"Well, what of him?"

The count looked up from the candle, but saw nothing to awaken his suspicions.

"Oh," he said carelessly as he left the room, "I do think him a very pitiful fellow."

CHAPTER VI.

A GIFT OF TONGUES.

My lady is an archer rare,
And in the greenwood joyeth she;

There never was a marksman yet who could compare
In skill with my ladie.

EARLY morning in Henley! From over the dusky and wooded hills in the east there comes a great flood of sun-

shine that lies warmly on the ruddy side of the old inn, on its evergreens, and on the slopes of sweet-scented mignonette and sweetbrier and various blossoms that lie along the river. And the river, lying apparently motionless between level and green meadows, has its blue surface marred here and there by a white ripple of wind; the poplars that stand on its banks are rustling in the breeze; there are swallows dipping and skimming about the old bridge, and ducks paddling along among the rushes and weeds, and cattle browsing in the deep green; and farther on, some high-lying stretches of ryegrass struck into long and silvery waves by the morning wind. All the stir and the motion of the new day have come upon us; and the clean white and red village, with its town-hall shining brightly down its chief street, and all its high clusters of old-fashioned houses backed by a fringe of dark-wooded hill, shows as much life and briskness as are usually seen in a quaint, small, old-fashioned English town. But where the silence and the stillness of the morning dwell is away up the reach of the river. Standing on the bridge, you see the dark blue stream, reflecting a thousand objects and bright colors underneath the town, gradually become grayer in hue until it gets out amid the meadows and woods; and then, with a bold white curve, that is glimmering like silver in the north, it sweeps under that line of low, soft green hills that have grown pearly and gray in the tender morning mist. Bell is standing on the bridge too. The lieutenant has brought out her sketch-book, and she has placed it on the stone parapet before her. But somehow she seems disinclined to begin work thus early on our journey, and, instead, her eyes are looking blankly and wistfully at the rich green meadows, and the red cows, and the long white reach of the river shining palely beneath the faint green heights in the north.

"Is Henley the prettiest town in the world, I wonder?" she said.

"Yes, if you think so, mademoiselle," replied Von Rosen gently.

She lifted her eyes toward him, as

though she had been unaware of his presence. Then she turned to the stream: "I suppose, if one were to live always among those bright colors, one would get not to see them, and would forget how fine is this old bridge, with the high-lying town, and the meadows, and the stream. Seeing it only once, I shall never forget Henley or the brightness of this morning."

With that she closed her sketch-book and looked round for Queen Titania. That small person was engaged in making herself extremely wretched about her boys and the pony, and was becoming vastly indignant because she could get no one to sympathize with her wild imaginings of diverse perils and dangers.

"Why, to hear you talk," she was saying at this moment, "one would think you had never experienced the feelings of a parent—that you did not know you were the father of those two poor boys."

"That," I remark to her, "is not a matter on which I am bound to express an opinion."

"Very pretty—very!" she said, with a contemptuous smile. "But I will say this—that if *you* had had to buy the pony, the boys would have had to wait long enough before they were exposed to the dangers you think so little about now."

"Madame," I observe sternly, "you are the victim of what theologians call invincible ignorance. I might have bought that pony and all its belongings for a twenty-pound note, whereas I shall have to pay forty pounds a year for its keep."

"Oh, I know," says my lady scornfully, "how men exaggerate those things. It is convenient. They complain of the cost of the horses, of the heaviness of taxes and other things; when the real fact is, that they are trying to hide what they spend out of their income on cigars and in their clubs when they go to town. I counted up our taxes the other day, and I don't believe they have been over eight pounds for the whole of the last six months. Now you *know* you said they were nearly thirty-five pounds a year."

"And you counted in those that are due next week, I suppose?"

"Which left you no money to pay," is the cruel retort.

"And you based your calculations on some solitary installment for armorial bearings?—which you brought into the family, you know."

"Yes," she retorts graciously. "That was one thing you did not require before—I am sorry to have caused you so much expense. But you need not avoid the subject. Mrs. Quinet told me last week that she knows her husband pays every year sixty-five pounds for club-subscriptions alone, and nearly forty for cigars."

"Then Mrs. Quinet must have looked into your eyes, my dear, and seen what a simple little thing you are; for your knowledge of housekeeping and other expenses I will say is as slight as need be, and Mrs. Quinet has been simply making a fool of you. For the major belongs to two clubs, and in the one he pays eight guineas and in the other ten guineas a year. And he smokes Manillas at twenty-five shillings a hundred, which is equivalent, my dear—though you will scarcely credit it—to threepence apiece."

"The money must go somehow," says Tita defiantly.

"That is a customary saying among women, but it generally refers to their own little arrangements."

"You avoid the question very skillfully."

"I should have thought you would have preferred that."

"Why?" she says, looking up.

"Because you accused me of stinginess in not buying a pony for the boys, and I showed you that I should have to pay forty pounds a year for the brute."

"Yes, *showed* me! I suppose by that pleasing fiction you will gain other twenty pounds a year to spend in Partagas and Murias and trumpery stuff that the tobaccoists tell you came from abroad."

"My dear," I say, "your insolence is astounding."

"If you call speaking the plain truth insolence, you will have some more of

it before you die. Bell, breakfast must be ready."

"Yes, my lady," says Bell, coming forward demurely. "But I wasn't doing anything."

So they went off, and the count and I followed.

"What is the matter?" says he.

"Do you know what a 'relish' is at breakfast?"

"No."

"Then don't marry, or you will find out."

The tall young man with the brown beard and the light eyes shrugged his shoulders, and only said, as we walked to the inn, "That is a very pleasant comedy, when it means nothing. If it was earnest you would not find so much enjoyment in it—no, not at all: you would not amuse yourselves, like two children, instead of the parents of a family. But, my dear friend, it is a dangerous thing; for some day you will meet with a stupid person, who will not understand how madame and yourself do make believe in that way, and that person will be astonished, and will talk of it, and you will both have a very bad reputation among your friends."

However, there was one amiable person at the breakfast-table, and that was Bell.

"Bell," I said, "I am going to sit by you. You never provoke useless quarrels about nothing; you are never impudent; you never argue; and you can look after a breakfast-table better than people twice your age."

Bell prudently pretended not to hear: indeed she was very busy helping everybody and making herself very useful and pleasant all round. She seemed to have forgotten her independent ways, and was so good-naturedly anxious to see that the lieutenant's coffee was all right that he was apparently quite touched by her friendliness. And then she was very cheerful too, and was bent on waking up the spirits of the whole party, but in a bright, submissive, simple fashion that the audacious young lady did not always affect.

"Did you hear the cocks crowing this

morning?" she said, turning to the count with her frank eyes. "I thought it was so pleasant to be woke up that way, instead of listening to the milkman coming along a dismal London square, and calling up the maid-servants with his 'El-cho! El-cho!' But did you notice that one of the cocks cried quite plainly, 'Oh, go away! Oh, go awa-a-ay!'—which was a stupid animal to have near an inn; and another fine fellow, who always started with a famous flourish, had got a cold, and at the highest note he went off at a tangent into something between a gurgle and a squeak. The intention of that crow, so far as it went, was far better than the feeble 'Oh, go away!' of the other; and I was quite sorry for the poor animal.—Do have some more toast, count.—He reminded me of poor Major Quinet, Tita, who begins a sentence very well, but all at once it jerks up into the air—goes off like a squib, you know, just below his nose—and he looks amazed and ashamed, like a boy that has let a bird escape out of a bag."

"You need not amuse yourself with the personal defects of your neighbors, Bell," says Tita, who did not expect to have Major Quinet brought forward again. "Major Quinet is a very well-informed and gentlemanly man, and looks after his family and his estate with the greatest care."

"I must say, Tita," retorted Bell, "that you have an odd trick of furnishing people with a sort of certificate of character whenever you hear their names mentioned. Very likely the major can manage his affairs in spite of his cracked voice; but you know you told me yourself, Tita, that he had been unfortunate in money-matters, and was rather perplexed just now. Of course, I wouldn't say such a thing of one of your friends, but I have heard of bankrupts; and I have heard of a poor little man being so burdened with debt that he looked like a mouse drawing a brougham, and then, of course, he had to go into the courts to ask them to unharness him.—Do have some more coffee, count: I am sure that is quite cold."

"Your aspersions are disgraceful, Bell," says my lady. "You know absolutely nothing of Major Quinet, and yet you hint that he is insolvent."

"I didn't—did I?" says Bell, turning to her companion.

"No," replies the count, boldly.

At this Tita looked astonished for a second; but presently she deigned to smile and say something about the wickedness of young people. Indeed, my lady seemed rather pleased by Bell's audacity in appealing to the lieutenant; and she was in a better humor when, some time after, we went out to the river and got a boat.

Once more upon the Thames, we pulled up the river, that lies here between wooded hills on the one side and level meadows on the other. The broad blue stream was almost deserted, and as we got near the pretty green islands, we could see an occasional incautious young moor-hen paddle out from among the rushes, and then go quickly in again, with its white tail bobbing in unison with its small head and beak. We rowed into the sluice of the mill that lies under Park Place, and there, having floated down a bit under some willows, we fixed the boat to a stump of a tree, landed, and managed to get into the road along which we had driven the previous night. As we ascended this pleasant path, which is cut through the woods of various mansions, and looks down upon the green level of Wargrave Marsh and the pleasant meadows beyond the other bank of the river, the ascents and descents of the road seemed less precipitous than they had appeared the night before. What we had taken, further, for wild masses of rock and fearful chasms and dangerous bridges, were found to be part of the ornamentation of a park—the bridge spanning a hollow having been built of sham rock-work, which in the daylight clearly revealed its origin. Nevertheless, this road leading through the river-side woods is a sufficiently picturesque and pleasant one; and in sauntering along for a mile or two and back, we consumed a goodly portion of the morning. Then there was

a brisk pull back to Henley, and the phaeton was summoned to appear.

When the horses were put in and the phaeton brought out, I found that the count had quietly abstracted the bearing-reins from the harness some time during the morning. However, no one could grudge the animals this relief, for the journey they had to make to-day, though not over twenty-three miles, was considerably hilly.

Now Tita had come early out, and had evidently planned a nice little arrangement. She got in behind. Then she bade Bell get up in front. The count had lingered for a moment in search of a cigar-case, and my lady had clearly determined to ask him to drive so soon as he came out. But, as she had not expressed any contrition for her conduct of that morning, some punishment was required; and so, just as the count came out, I took the reins, stepped up beside Bell, and he, of course, was left to join the furious little lady behind.

"I thought the count was going to drive," says Tita with a certain cold air. "Surely the road to Oxford is easy to find."

"It is," I say to her. "For you know all roads lead to Rome, and they say that Oxford is halfway to Rome: *argal*—"

But knowing what effect this reference to her theological sympathies was likely to have on Tita, I thought it prudent to send the horses on; and as they sprang forward and rattled up the main street of Henley, her retort, if any, was lost in the noise. There was a laugh in Bell's eyes, but she seemed rather frightened all the same, and said nothing for some time.

The drive from Henley to Oxford is one of the finest in England, the road leading gradually up through pleasant pastures and great woods until it brings you on to a common—the highest ground south of the Trent—from which you see an immeasurable wooded plain stretching away into the western horizon. First of all, as we left Henley on that bright morning, the sweet air blowing coolly among the trees, and bringing us odors from wild flowers and breadths of new-mown hay, we leisurely rolled along

what is appropriately called the Fair Mile, a broad smooth highway running between Lambridge Wood and No Man's Hill, and having a space of grassy common on each side of it. This brought us up to Assenton Cross, and here, the ascent getting much more stiff, Bell took the reins, and the count and I walked up the hill until we reached Bix turnpike.

"What a curious name!" said Bell, as she pulled the horses up.

"Most likely," said the count, who was looking at an ancient edition of Cary's *Itinerary*, "it is from the old Saxon *bece*, the beech tree, which is plentiful here. But in this book I find it is Bix-gibwen, which is not in the modern books. Now what is gibwen?"

"St. Caedwyn, of course," said Bell, merrily.

"You laugh, but perhaps it is true," replied the lieutenant, with the gravity befitting a student: "why not St. Caedwyn's beeches? You do call many places about here by the trees. There is Assenton—that is, the place of ash trees. We shall soon be at Nettlebed; and then comes Nuffield, which is Nutfield,—how do you call your wild nut tree in England?"

"The hazel," said Bell. "But that is commonplace: I like the discovery about St. Caedwyn's beeches better; and here, sure enough, they are."

The road at this point—something less than a mile past Bix turnpike—plunges into a spacious forest of beeches, which stretches along the summit of the hill almost on to Nettlebed. And this road is bordered by a strip of common, which again leads into a tangled maze of bracken and brier; and then you have the innumerable stems of the beeches, showing long vistas into the green heart of the wood. The sunlight was shimmering down on this wilderness, lying warmly on the road and its green margin, and piercing here and there with golden arrows the dense canopy of leaves beyond. High as we were, the light breeze was shut off by the beeches, and in the long broad cleft in which the road lay the air was filled with resinous odors, that of the tall green and yellow brackens prevail-

ing. An occasional jay fled screaming down between the smooth gray branches, giving us a glimpse of white and blue as it vanished; but otherwise there seemed to be no birds about, and the wild underwood and long alleys lay still and warm in the green twilight of the leaves.

"It is very like the Black Forest, I think," said the lieutenant.

"Oh, it is far lighter in color," cried Bell. "Look at all those silver grays of the stems and the lichens, and the clear green overhead, and the light browns and reds beneath, where the sunlight shines down through a veil. It is lighter, prettier, more cheerful than your miles of solemn pines, and the great roads cut through them for the carts, and the gloom and stillness underneath, where there is no growth of underwood, but only level beds of green moss dotted with dropped cones."

"You have a very accurate eye for colors, mademoiselle: no wonder you paint so well," was all that the lieutenant said.

But Tita warmly remonstrated with Bell. "You know very well," she said, "that all the Black Forest is not like that: there is every variety of forest scenery there. And pray, Miss Criticism, where were the gloomy pines and the solemn avenues in a certain picture which was sold at the Dudley last year for twenty-five solid English sovereigns?"

"You needn't tell Count von Rosen what my income is," said Bell. "I took two months to paint that picture."

"That is a very good income," said the count with a smile.

"I do not like people with large incomes," said Bell, avoiding that part of the subject. "I think they must have qualms sometimes, or else be callous. Now I would have everybody provided with a certain income, say two hundred pounds a year; but I would not like to prevent all competition, and so I would fix an income at which all people must stop. They might strive and strive if they liked, just like bells of air in a champagne glass, you know, but they should only be able to reach a certain level in the end. I would have nobody

with more than one thousand pounds a year; that would be my maximum."

"A thousand a year!" exclaimed Tita. "Isn't a thousand ten hundred?"

"Yes," said Bell, after a second's calculation.

"And suppose you have one hundred to pay for two boys at school, and another hundred for rent, and another hundred for the keep of two horses, and a hundred and twenty for servants' wages—"

"Perhaps, Tita," I suggest in the meekest possible way, "you might as well tell Count von Rosen what you pay for a leg of mutton, so that when he next comes to dine with us he may enjoy himself the more."

It is well that the lightning which is said to dart from women's eyes is a harmless sort of thing—a flash in the pan, as it were, which is very pretty, but sends no deadly lead out. However, as Queen Tita had really behaved herself very well since we set out from Henley, I begged Bell to stop and let us in, and then I asked the lieutenant if he would drive.

By this time we had walked the horses nearly to the end of the pleasant stretch of beechwood, which is about a mile and a half long, and before us was a bit of breezy common and the village of Nettlebed. The count took the reins and sent the horses forward.

"Why did you not continue to drive?" said Tita, rather timidly, when I had taken my seat beside her.

"Because we shall presently have to go down steep hills, and as the count took off the bearing-reins this morning, we may as well hold him responsible for not letting the horses down."

"I thought perhaps you wanted to sit beside me," she said in a low voice.

"Well, now you mention it, my dear, that was the reason,"

"It would have been a sufficient reason a good many years ago," she said, with a fine affectation of tenderness, "but that is all over now. You have been very rude to me."

"Then don't say anything more about it: receive my forgiveness, Tita."

"That was not the way you used to

speaking to me when we were at Eastbourne," she said; and with that she looked very much as if she were going to cry. Of course she was not going to cry. She has had the trick of looking like that from her youth upward, but as it is really about as pretty and pathetic as the real thing, it invariably answers the same purpose. It is understood to be a signal of surrender, a sort of appeal for compassion; and so the rest of this conversation, being of a quite private nature, need not be made public.

The count was taking us at a brisk pace across the bit of common, and then we rattled into the little clump of red-brick houses which forms the picturesque village of Nettlebed. Now, if he had been struck with some recollection of the Black Forest on seeing Nettlebed Wood, imagine his surprise on finding the little inn in the village surmounted by a picture of a white deer with a royal crown on its head, that legendary creature that figures in so many of the Schwarzwald stories and ballads and books! However, we were out of Nettlebed before he could properly express his astonishment, and in the vast picture that was now opening out before us there was little that was German. Indeed, the view from the summit of Nuffield Heath, which we were now approaching, is as thoroughly English in character as any to be found within the four seas. It is not unlike, by the way, the great and varied landscape which is to be seen from the hill above Monks Risborough in Bucks, the white cross of which smooth eminence, on a clear day, becomes visible to the Oxford undergraduates as a pale streak glimmering among the dark beechwoods along the horizon.

We stopped on the summit of Nuffield Heath, and found below us, as far as the eye could reach, the great and fertile plain of Berkshire, with a long and irregular line of hill shutting it in on the south. In this plain of Fields as they are called—Wallingford Field, Didcot Field, Long Wittenham Field, and so on—small villages peeped out from among the green woods and pastures, where a faint blue

smoke rose up into the sunshine. Here, as Bell began to expound—for she had been reading *The Scouring of the White Horse*, and various other books to which that romantic monograph had directed her—some great deeds had happened in the olden time. Along that smooth line of hill in the south, now lying blue in the haze of the light, the Romans had cut a road which is still called the Ridge-way or Iccleton Street; and in the villages of the plain, from Pangbourne in the south-east to Shellingford in the north-west, traces of the Roman occupation were frequently found. And then underneath that blue ridge of hill and down lay Wantage, in which King Arthur was born; and farther on the ridge itself becomes Dragon's Hill, where St. George slew the beast that ravaged this fair country; and there, as all men know, is the figure of the White Horse cut on the slope to commemorate the great battle of Ashdown.

"And Ashdown, is that there also?" asked the lieutenant.

"Well, no," said Bell, trying to remember what she had been told. "I think there is some doubt about it. King Arthur, you know, fell back from Reading when he was beaten, but he stopped somewhere on the hills near—"

"Why not the hill we have just come up?" said the lieutenant with a laugh. "It is near Reading, is it not? and there you have Assenton, which is Ashenton, which is Ashendown, which is Ashdown."

"Precisely," says Tita with a gracious smile. "All you have to do is to change John into Julius, and Smith into Cæsar, and there you are."

"But that is not fair, Tita," said Bell, turning round and pleading quite seriously. "Assenton is the same as Ashendon, and that is the name of the place where the battle was fought. I think Count von Rosen is quite right."

"Well, if you think so, Bell, that settles it," said my lady, looking rather pleased than otherwise.

And so we began to descend into the plain of many memories by a steep road that is appropriately called Gangsdown Hill. From thence a succession of undu-

lations carried us into the green breadths of Crowmarsh Field; until, finally, we drove into the village of Bensington, and pulled up at "The Crown" there, where we proposed to have some luncheon.

"This is a village of the dead," said Tita, looking down the main thoroughfare, where not a living soul was to be seen.

But at all events a human being appeared in the yard—not a withered and silent ostler, but a stout, hale, cheerful person, whose white shirt sleeves and gold chain proclaimed him landlord. With the aid of a small boy he undertook to put the horses up for an hour or two; and then we went into the inn. Here we found that, as the man in the yard was at once landlord and ostler, his wife inside was landlady, cook and waitress; and in a short space of time she had brought us some excellent chops. Not much time was spent over the meal, for the parlor in which we sat—albeit it was a sort of museum of wonderful curiosities, and was, moreover, enlivened by the presence of a crack-toiled cockatoo—was rather small and dark. Accordingly, while the horses were having their rest, we sauntered out to have a look at Bensington.

It is probably not the dullest little village in England, but it would be hard to find a duller. There was an old shepherd with a crook in his hand and a well-worn smockfrock on his back, who was leaning over the wooden palings in front of a house, and playfully talking to a small boy who stood at an open door. With many old country-people it is considered as the height of raillery to alarm a boy with stories of the punishment he is about to receive for something, and to visit him with an intimation that all his sins have been found out. This old shepherd, with his withered pippin face, and his humorous grin, and his lazy arms folded on the top of the palings, was evidently enjoying himself vastly: "A wur a-watchin' o' thee, a wur, and thy vather, he knows too, and he'll gie thee thy vairin wi' a good tharn stick when he comes h'wom. A zah thee this marnin', my lad: thou'lt think nah one wur thear, eh?"

We left this good-natured old gentleman frightening the boy, and went round to the outskirts of the village. Here, at least, we found one explanation of the inordinate silence of Bensington—the children were all at their lessons. The door of the plain little building, which had *BRITISH SCHOOL* inscribed over the entrance, was open, and from within there issued a low, confused murmur. The Prussian, anxious to see something of the interior of an English school, walked up to the place, but he had just managed to cast a glance round on the rows of children when the door was politely shut in his face, and he returned, saying, "I am not an inspector: why need they fear?"

But when, after wandering about the suburban gardens and byways for a space, we returned to Bensington, we found that important village in a state of profound excitement. In the main thoroughfare a concourse of five people had assembled—three women and two children—and from the doors of the houses on both sides of the street innumerable faces, certainly not less than a dozen, were gazing forth. It is true that the people did not themselves come out—they seemed rather to shrink from courting publicity—but they were keenly alive to what was going on, and Bensington had become excited.

For there had come into the main street a little, dry, odd old man, who was leading a small donkey-cart, and who was evidently rather the worse for liquor. He was a seller of peas. He had summoned the inhabitants to come out and buy the peas, and he was offering them at what we are told were very reasonable terms. But just as the old man was beginning to enjoy the receipt of customs, there drove into the place a sharp, brisk, middle-aged man, with a shiny face, a fine presence and a ringing voice. This man had a neat cart, a handsome pony, and his name was printed in large letters, so that all could read. He was also a seller of peas. Now, although the rude and ostentatious owner of the pony was selling his peas at fourpence, while the humble proprietor of the donkey sold

his at threepence, the women recalled their children and bade them go to the dearer market. There was something in the appearance of the man, in the neatness of his cart and in the ringing cheerfulness of his voice, which told you he sold good peas. This was the cause of the great perturbation in Bensington; for no sooner did the half-tipsy old man see that his rival was carrying the day before him, than he leaned his arms over his donkey's head and began to make ironical comments on his enemy and on the people of Bensington. He was apparently in the best of spirits. You would have thought it delighted him to see small girls come timidly forward to him, and then be warned away by a cry from their mothers that they were to go to the other cart. Nay, he went the length of advertising his neighbor's wares. He addressed the assembled multitudes—by this time there were nearly fifteen people visible in Bensington—and told them he wouldn't sell his peas if he was to get a fortune for them. "Pay your soppence," he said to them, in accents which showed that he was not of Bensington born: "there are yer right good peas. It's all along o' my donkey as you'll not take mine, though they're only thrippence. I wouldn't sell. I won't sell this day. Take back yer money. I won't sell my peas at a crown apiece—darned if I do."

And with that he left his donkey and went over to the proprietor of the pony. He was not in a fighting mood—not he. He challenged his rival to run the pony against the donkey, and offered to bet the donkey would be in London a week before the other. The man in the cart took no notice of these sallies. In a brisk, practical, methodical fashion he was measuring out his peas, and handing them down to the uplifted bowls that surrounded him. Sometimes he grinned in a good-natured way at the facetious remarks of his unfortunate antagonist, but all the same he stuck to his business and drove a thriving trade. How there came to be on that afternoon so many people in Bensington who wished to buy peas must remain a mystery.

"And now," said Bell, as we once

more got into the phaeton, "we shall be in Oxford in two hours. Do you think the post-office will be open?"

"Very likely," said Tita, with some surprise; "but do you expect letters already, Bell?"

"You cannot tell," said the young lady with just a shade of embarrassment, "how soon Kate may send letters after us. And she knows we are to stop a day at Oxford. It will not be too dark to go hunting for the post-office, will it?"

"But you shall not go," said the lieutenant, giving a little fillip to the reins, as if in obedience to Bell's wish. "When you have got to the hotel, I will go and get your letters for you."

"Oh no, thank you," said Bell, in rather a hurried and anxious way. "I should prefer much to go for them myself, thank you."

That was all that was said on the subject; and Bell, we noticed, was rather silent for the first few miles of our afternoon drive. The lieutenant did his best to amuse her, and carried on a lively conversation chiefly by himself. That mention of letters seemed to have left Bell rather serious, and she was obviously not over-delighted at the prospect of reaching Oxford.

The road from Bensington thither is pleasant enough, but not particularly interesting. For the most part it descends by a series of undulations into the level plain watered by the Isis, the Cherwell and the Thames. But the mere notion of approaching that famous city which is consecrated with memories of England's greatest men—statesmen and divines, melancholy philosophers and ill-starred poets—is in itself impressive, and lends to the rather commonplace landscape an air of romance. While as yet the old town lies unseen amid the woods that crowd up to the very edge of the sky, one fancies the bells of the colleges are to be heard, as Pope heard them when he rode, a solitary horseman, over these very hills, and down into the plain, and up to Magdalen Bridge.* We cared

* "Nothing could have more of that melancholy which once used to please me than my last day's journey; for after having passed through my favorite

woods in the forest, with a thousand reveries of past pleasures, I rid over hanging hills whose tops were edged with groves, and whose feet were watered with winding rivers, listening to the falls of cataracts below and the murmuring of the winds above; the gloomy verdure of Stonor succeeded to these, and then the shades of evening overtook me. The moon rose in the clearest sky I ever saw, by whose solemn light I paced on slowly, without company or any interruption to the range of my thoughts. About a mile before I reached Oxford all the bells tolled in different notes: the clocks of every college answered one another and sounded forth (some in deeper, some in a softer tone) that it was eleven at night. All this was no ill preparation to the life I have led since among those old walls, venerable galleries, stone porticoes, studious walks and solitary scenes of the University." —*Pope to Mrs. Martha Blount*. [Stonor Park lies about two miles to the right of Bix turnpike.]

little to look at the villages strung like beads on the winding thread of the road—Shellingford, Dorchester, Nuncham Courtenay and Sandford—nor did we even turn aside to go down to Iffley and the Thames. It was seven when we drew near Oxford. There were people sauntering out from the town to have their evening walk. When at last we stopped to pay toll in front of the old lichen-covered bridge across the Cherwell, the tower of Magdalen College and the magnificent elms on the other side of the way had caught a tinge of red from the dusky sunset, and there was a faint reflection of crimson down on the still waters that lay among the rank green meadows. Then we drove on into the High street, and here, in the gathering dusk, the yellow lamps were beginning to glimmer. Should we pull up at the Angel, that famous hostelry of ancient times, whose name used to be inscribed on so many notable coaches? "We put up at the Angel Inn," writes Mr. Boswell, "and passed the evening by ourselves in easy and familiar conversation." Alas! the Angel has now been pulled down. Or shall we follow the hero of *The Splendid Shilling*, who,

When nightly mists arise,
To Juniper's Magpie or Town Hall repairs?

These, too, are gone. But as Castor and Pollux, during these moments of doubt and useless reminiscence, are still taking us over the rough stones of the High street, some decision must be come to; and so, at a sudden instigation, Count von Rosen pulls up in front of

woods in the forest, with a thousand reveries of past pleasures, I rid over hanging hills whose tops were edged with groves, and whose feet were watered with winding rivers, listening to the falls of cataracts below and the murmuring of the winds above; the gloomy verdure of Stonor succeeded to these, and then the shades of evening overtook me. The moon rose in the clearest sky I ever saw, by whose solemn light I paced on slowly, without company or any interruption to the range of my thoughts. About a mile before I reached Oxford all the bells tolled in different notes: the clocks of every college answered one another and sounded forth (some in deeper, some in a softer tone) that it was eleven at night. All this was no ill preparation to the life I have led since among those old walls, venerable galleries, stone porticoes, studious walks and solitary scenes of the University." —*Pope to Mrs. Martha Blount*. [Stonor Park lies about two miles to the right of Bix turnpike.]

the Mitre, which is an appropriate sign for the High street of Oxford, and be-tokens age and respectability.

The stables of the Mitre are clean, well-ventilated and well-managed—in-deed, no better stables could have been found for putting up the horses for their next day's rest. When we had seen to their comfort we returned to the inn, and found my lady and Bell had not only had all the luggage conveyed to our respective rooms, but had ordered dinner, changed their attire, and were waiting for us in the square, old-fashioned, low-roofed coffee-room which looks out into the High street. A tall waiter was laying the cloth for us; the lights were lit all round the wall; our only companions were two elderly gentlemen who sat in a remote corner and gave themselves up to politics; and Bell, having resolved to postpone her inquiry about letters until next morn-ing—in obedience to the very urgent entreaties of the lieutenant—seemed all the more cheerful for that resolution.

But if our two friends by the fireplace could not overhear our talk, we could overhear theirs, and all the time we sat at dinner we were receiving a vast amount of enlightenment about the condition of the country. The chief spokesman was a short, stout person, with a fresh, healthy, energetic face, keen gray eyes, bushy gray whiskers, a bald head and a black satin waistcoat—his companion a taller and thinner man, with straight black hair, sallow cheeks and melancholy dark eyes; and the former, in a somewhat pompous manner, was demonstrating the blindness of ordinary politicians to the wrath that was to come. Lord Palmerston saw it, he said. There was no statesman ever like Lord Palmerston—there would never be his like again. For was the North not bound to fight the South in every country? And what should we do if the men of the great manufacturing towns were to come down on us? There were two Englands in this island—and the Westminster Houses knew nothing of the rival camps that were being formed. And did not the North always beat the South? Did

not Rome beat Carthage? and the Huns the Romans? and the Northern States the Southern States? and Prussia Austria? and Germany France? And when the big-limbed and determined men of Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester, Preston, Newcastle and such towns rose to sweep aside the last feudal institutions of this country, of what avail would be a protest on the part of the feeble and self-indulgent South?

"This kingdom, sir," said the gentleman with the satin waistcoat and gold seals, in such lofty tones that Count von Rosen scarcely minded his dinner—"this kingdom, sir, is more divided at this moment than it was during the Wars of the Roses. It is split into hostile factions; and which is the more patriotic? Neither. There is no patriotism left—only the selfishness of class. We care no more for the country as a country. We are cosmopolitan. The skepticism of the first French Revolution has poisoned our big towns. We tolerate a monarchy as a harmless toy. We tolerate an endowed priesthood, because we think they cannot make our peasantry more ignorant than they are. We allow pauperism to increase and eat into the heart of the state, because we think it no business of ours to interfere. We see our lowest classes growing up to starve or steal, in ignorance and dirt; our middle classes scrambling for wealth to get out of the state they were born in; our upper classes given over to luxury and debauchery—patriotism gone—continental nations laughing at us—our army a mere handful of men with incompetent officers—our navy made the subject of destructive experiments by interested cliques—our government ready to seize on the most revolutionary scheme to get together a majority and remain in power—selfishness, incompetence, indifference become paramount. It is horrible, sir, it is 'orrible.'" In his anxiety to be emphatic, he left out that one *h*: it was his only slip.

Count von Rosen turned to Tita, and said, "I have met many English people in Germany who have spoken to me like that. They do seem to have a pride in criticising themselves and their country.

Is it because they feel they are so strong, and so rich and so good that they can afford to dispraise themselves? Is it because they feel themselves so very safe in this island that they think little of patriotism? But I have observed this thing—that when it is a foreigner who begins to say such things of England, your countryman, he instantly changes his tone. He may say himself bad things of his country, but he will not allow any one else. That is very good—very right. But I would rather have a Frenchman who is very vain of his country, and says so at every moment, than an Englishman who is very vain and pretends to disparage it. The Frenchman is more honest."

"But there are many Englishmen who think England wants great improvements," said Tita.

"Improvements! Yes. But it is another thing you hear so many Englishmen say, that their country is all wrong: 'going to the dogs' is what you say for that. Well, they do not believe it true—it is impossible to be true; and they do not look well with us foreigners when they say so. For myself, I like to see a man proud of his country, whatever country it is; and if my country were England, do not you think I should be proud of her great history, and her great men, and her powers of filling the world with colonies, and—what I think most of all—her courage in making the country free to every man, and protecting opinions that she herself does not believe, because it is right? When my countrymen hear Englishmen talk like that, they cannot understand."

You should have seen Bell's face—the pride and the gratitude that were in her eyes, while she did not speak.

"You would not have us go about praising ourselves for doing right?" said Tita.

"No," he said, "but you ought not to go about professing yourselves to be less satisfied with your country than you are."

Before breaking up for the night, we came to a reckoning about our progress and probable line of route. Fifty-eight miles: that was the exact distance, by

straight road, we had got on our way to Scotland at the end of the third day.

"And to-morrow," said Tita as she finished giving the lieutenant his first lesson in bezique, "counts for nothing, as we remain here. Fifty-eight miles in three days looks rather small, does it not? But I suppose we shall get there in course of time."

"Yes," said Bell gently as she put the markers straight, "in Pollux' course of time."

My lady rose and in her severest tones ordered the girl to bed.

[*Note by Queen Titania, written at Oxford the day after our arrival there.*]

"If these jottings of our journey come to be published, I beg to say that, so far as I appear in them, they are very unfair. I hope I am not so terrible a person as all that comes to. The truth is—and I have noticed it in many families—a man of *obstinate will* and of *uncertain temper* likes nothing so much as to pretend to his friends that he suffers dreadfully from the tyranny of his wife. It is merely self-complacency. He knows no one dares thwart him, and so he thinks it highly humorous to give himself the air of being much injured and of being very good-natured, when those who are near him *know better*. He is as obstinate as a rock, and he can afford to treat compassionately the water that runs round and passes by without moving him the eighth of an inch. So far for myself. I do not care. I dare say most people who look at these memoranda will be able to decide whether the trifling misunderstandings—which have been *much exaggerated* and made to look *serious*—were owing to me. But as for Bell, I do not think it right to joke about her position at all. She does her best to keep up her spirits—and she is a brave, good girl, who likes to be cheerful, if only for the sake of those around her—but this affair of Arthur Ashburton is causing her *deep anxiety* and a good deal of vexation. Why she should have some vague impression that she has treated him badly, I cannot see, for the very reverse is the case. But surely it is absurd

to make this *lovers' quarrel* the pretext for dragging Bell into a wild romance, which the writer of the foregoing pages seems bent on doing. Indeed, with regard to this subject, I cannot do better than repeat a conversation which, with *characteristic ingenuity*, he has entirely omitted. He said to me, while we were wandering about Bensington, and Bell had strolled on with Count von Rosen, 'After all, our phaeton is not a microcosm. We have not the complete elements for a romance. We have no villain with us.'

"'You flatter yourself,' I remarked; which did not seem to please him, but he pretended not to hear.

"'There will be no dark background to our adventures—no crime, secrecy, plotting, or malicious thwarting of Bell's happiness. It will be like a magic-lantern slide, with all the figures painted in rose-color.'

"'What do you mean by Bell's happiness?' I asked.

"'Her marriage with the lieutenant, and there is no villain to oppose it. If we had a villain, there is no room for him: the phaeton only holds four comfortably.'

"'Really this was too much. I could scarcely control my *impatience* with such folly. I have said before that the girl does not wish to marry any one; but if there were any thought of marriage in her mind, surely her anxiety about that

letter points in a different way. Of course I was immediately taunted with scheming to throw Bell and Count von Rosen together during our drive. I admit that I did so, and mean to do so. We ought not to expect young folks to be always delighted with the society of their elders, especially when the latter think it fine to be continually *laughing at them*. It is only natural that these two young people should become companions; but what of that? And as to the nonsense about a villain, who ever saw one? Out of a novel or a play, I never saw a villain, and I don't know anybody who ever did. It seems to me there is a good deal of self-satisfaction in the notion that we four are all so amiable and angelic that it wants some disagreeable person to throw us into relief. Are we all painted in rose-color? Looking back over these pages, I do not think so; but I am not surprised, considering *who had the wielding of the brush*. In the mean time, I am grieved to see Bell, without the intervention of any villain whatever, undergoing great anxiety; and I wish the girl had sufficient courage to sit down at once and write to Arthur Ashburton, and absolutely forbid him to do anything so foolish as seek an interview with her. If he should do so, it is impossible to say what may come of it, for Bell has a good deal of pride with all her gentleness.—T."



PART III.

CHAPTER VII.

ATRA CURA.

O gentle wind that bloweth south
To where my love repaireth,
Convey a kiss to his dear mouth,
And tell me how he fareth !

"MY dear, you are unphilosophical. Why should you rebuke Bell for occasionally using one of those quaint American phrases which have wandered into this country? I can remember a young person who had a great trick of quoting Italian—especially in moments of tenderness—but that was a long time ago, and perhaps she has forgotten—"

"It is shameful of you," says Queen Titania hastily, "to encourage Bell in that way. She would never do anything of the kind but for you. And you know very well that quoting a foreign language is quite a different thing from using those stupid Americanisms, that are only fit for negro concerts."

"My dear, you are unphilosophical. When America started in business on her own account she forgot to furnish herself with an independent language, but ever since she has been working hard to supply the deficiency. By and by you will find an American language—sharp, concise, expressive—built on the diffuse and heavy foundations of our own English. Why should not Bell use those tentative phrases which convey so much in so few syllables? Why call it slang? What is slang but an effort at conciseness?"

Tita looked puzzled, vexed and desperate, and inadvertently turned to Count von Rosen, who was handing the sugar-basin to Bell. He seemed to understand the appeal, for he immediately said, "Oh, but you know that is not the objection. I do not think mademoiselle does talk in that way, or should be criticised about it by any one; but the wrong that is done by introducing those slang words is, that it destroys the history of a language. It

perverts the true meaning of roots—it takes away the poetry of derivations—it confuses the student."

"And who thought of students when the various objects in life were christened? And whence came the roots? And is not language always an experiment, producing fresh results as people find it convenient? And why are we to give up succinct words or phrases because the dictionaries of the last generation consecrated them to a particular use? My dear children, the process of inventing language goes on from year to year, changing, modifying, supplying and building up new islands out of the common sand and the sea. And I say that Bell, having an accurate ear for fit sounds, shall use such words as she likes; and if she can invent epithets of her own—"

"But, please, I don't wish to do anything of the kind," says Bell, looking quite shamefaced.

That is just the way of those women: interfere to help them in a difficulty and they straightway fly over to the common enemy, especially if he happens to represent a social majority.

I began to perceive about this stage of our journey that a large number of small articles over which Bell had charge were now never missing. Whenever she wanted a map or a guide-book, or any one of the things which had been specially entrusted to her, it was forthcoming directly. Nay, she never had, like Tita, to look for a hat or a shawl or a scarf or a packet of bezique-cards. I also began to notice that when she missed one of those things she somehow inadvertently turned to our lieutenant, who was quite sure to know where it was, and to hand it to her on the instant. The consequence on this morning was, that when we all came down prepared to go out for an exploration of Oxford, we found Bell at the window of the coffee-room already dressed, and looking pla-

cldly out into the High street, where the sunlight was shining down on the top of the old-fashioned house opposite, and on the bran-new bank, which, as a compliment to the prevailing style of the city, has been built in very distinguished Gothic.

It was proposed that we should first go down and have a look at Christ Church College.

"And that will just take us past the post-office," said Bell.

"Why, how do you know that? Have you been out?" asked Tita.

"No," replied Bell, simply, "but Count von Rosen told me where it was."

"Oh, I have been all over the town this morning," said the lieutenant carelessly. "It is the finest town I have ever seen—a sort of Gothic Munich, but old, very old—not new and white like Munich, where the streets do ask you to look at their fine buildings. And I have been down to the river—that is very fine, too: even the appearance of the old colleges and buildings from the meadows—that is wonderful."

"Have you made any other discoveries this morning?" said Queen Tita with a gracious smile.

"Yes," said the young man, lightly. "I have discovered that the handsome young waiter who did give us our breakfast, that he has been a rider in a circus—which I did suspect myself, from his manner and attitudes—and also an actor. He is a very fine man, but not much spirit. I was asking him this morning why he is not a soldier. He despises that, because you pay a shilling a day. That is a pity your soldiers are not—what shall I say—respectable?—that your best young men do not like to go with them and become under-officers. But I do not know he is good stuff for a soldier: he smiles too much, and makes himself pleasant. Perhaps that is only because he is a waiter."

"Have you made any other acquaintances this morning?" says Tita with a friendly amusement in her eyes.

"No, no one—except the old gentleman who did talk politics last night. He is gone away by the train to Birmingham."

"Pray when do you get up in the morning?"

"I did not look that; but there was no one in the streets when I went out, as there would be in a German town; and even now there is a great dullness. I have inquired about the students: they are all gone home, it is a vacation. And a young lady in a book-shop told me that there is no life in the town when the students are gone—that all places close early—that even the milliners' shops are closed just now at half-past seven, when they are open till nine when the students are here."

"And what," says my lady with a look of innocent wonder—"what have the students to do with milliners' shops, that such places should be kept open on *their* account?"

No one could offer a sufficient solution of this problem, and so we left the coffee-room and plunged into the glare of the High street.

It would be useless to attempt here any detailed account of that day's long and pleasant rambling through Oxford. To any one who knows the appearance and the associations of the grand old city—who is familiar with the various mass of crumbling colleges and quiet cloisters and grassy quadrangles—who has wandered along the quaint clean streets that look infinitely staid and orthodox, and are as old as the splendid elms that break in continually on the lines and curves of the prevailing architecture,—to one who has even seen the city at a distance, with its thousand spires and turrets set amid fair green meadows and girt about with the silver windings of streams, any such brief recapitulation would be inexpressibly bald and useless; while he to whom Oxford is unknown can learn nothing of its beauties and impressions without going there. Our party absolutely refused to go sight-seeing, and were quite content to accept the antiquarian researches of the guide-books on credit. It was enough for us to ramble leisurely through the old courts and squares and alleys, where the shadows lay cool under the gloomy walls, or under avenues of magnificent elms.

But first of all we paid a more formal visit to Christ Church, and on our way thither the lieutenant stopped Bell at the post-office. She begged leave to ask for letters herself, and presently reappeared with two in her hand. "These are from the boys," she said to Queen Titania: "there is one for you, and one for papa."

"You have had no letter?" said Tita.

"No," said Bell somewhat gravely, as I fancied, and for some time after she seemed rather thoughtful and anxious.

As we paused underneath the archway in front of the sunlit quadrangle of Christ Church College, the letters from the boys were read aloud. This is the first one, which shows the pains a boy will take to write properly to his mother, especially when he can lay his hands on some convenient guide-book to correspondence:

"COWLEY HOUSE, TWICKENHAM.

"MY DEAR MAMMA: I take up my pen to let you know that I am quite well, and hope that this will find you in the enjoyment of good health. My studies are advancing favably, and I hope I shall continue to please my teacher and my dear parents, who have been so kind to me and are anxious for my well-fare. I look forward with much delight to the approaching hollidays, and I am, my dear mamma,

"Your affectionate son, JACK."

"P. S. He does gallop so; and he eats beans."

Master Tom, on the other hand, showed that the fear of his mother was not on him when he sat down to write. Both of them had evidently just been impressed with the pony's galloping, for the second letter was as follows:

"COWLEY HOUSE, TWICKENHAM.

"MY DEAR PAPA: He does gallop so, you can't think [this phrase, as improper, was hastily scored through] and I took him down to the river and the boys were very Impertinent and I rode him down to the river and they had to run away from their clothes and he went into the river a good bit and was not afraid but you know he cannot swim yet as he is very young Harry French says and Doctor Ashburton went with us yesterday my

dear papa to the ferry and Dick was taken over in the ferry and we all went threw the trees by Ham House and up to Ham Common and back by Richmond bridge and Dick was not a bit Tired. But what do you think my dear papa Doctor Ashburton says all our own money won't pay for his hay and corn and he will starve if you do not send some please my dear papa to send some at once because if he starvves once he will not get right again and the Ostler says he is very greedy but he his a very good pony and very intelgent dear papa Doctor Ashburton has bawt us each a riding-whip but I never hit him over the ears which the Ostler says is dangerus and you must tell the German gentleman that Jack and I are very much obled [scored out] obledg [also scored out] obliged to him, and send our love to him and to dear Auntie Bell and to dear Mamma and I am my dear papa your affexnate son.

TOM."

"It is really disgraceful," said the mother of the scamps, "the shocking way those boys spell. Really, Doctor Ashburton must be written to. At their age, and with such letters as these—it is shameful!"

"I think they are very clever boys," said Bell; "and I hope you won't impose extra lessons on them just as they have got a pony."

"They ought not to have had the pony until they had given a better account of themselves at school," said my lady severely; to which Bell only replied by saying, in a pensive manner, that she wished she was a boy of nine years of age, just become possessed of a pony and living in the country.

We spent a long time in Christ Church College, more especially in the magnificent hall, where the historical portraits greatly interested Bell. She entered into surmises as to the sensations which must have been felt by the poets and courtiers of Queen Elizabeth's time when they had to pay compliments to the thin-faced, red-haired woman who is here represented in her royal satins and pearls; and wondered whether, after they had

celebrated her as the Queen of Beauty, they afterward reconciled these flatteries to their conscience by looking on them as sarcasm. But whereas Bell's criticism of the picture was quite gentle and unprejudiced, there was a good deal more of acerbity in the tone in which Queen Tita drew near to speak of Holbein's Henry VIII. My firm belief is, that the mother of those two boys at Twickenham, if she only had the courage of her opinions, and dared to reveal those secret sentiments which now find expression in decorating our bed-rooms with missal-like texts, and in the use of ritualistic phrases to describe ordinary portions of the service and ordinary days of the year, would really be discovered to be— But let that pass. What harm Henry VIII. had done her, I could not make out. Any one may perceive that that monarch has not the look of an ascetic; that the contour of his face and the setting of his eyes are not particularly pleasing; that he could not easily be mistaken for Ignatius Loyola. But why any woman of these present days, who subscribes to Mudie's, watches the costumes of the princess of Wales, and thinks that Dr. Pusey has been ungenerously treated, should regard a portrait of Henry VIII. as though he had done her an injury only the week before last, it is not easy to discover. Bell, on the other hand, was discoursing to the lieutenant about the various workmanship of the pictures, and giving him a vast amount of information about technical matters, in which he appeared to take a deep interest.

"But did you ever paint upon panel yourself, mademoiselle?" he asked.

"Oh yes," said Bell: "I was at one time very fond of it. But I never made it so useful as a countryman of mine once suggested it might be. He was a Cumberland farmer who had come down to our house at Ambleside, and when he saw me painting on a piece of wood he looked at it with great curiosity.

"'Heh, lass,' he said, 'thou's pentin' a fne pictur' there, and on wood, too. Is't for the yell-house?'

"'No,' I said, explaining that I was

painting for my own pleasure, and that it was not a public-house sign.

"'To please thyself', heh? And when thou's dune wi' the pictur', thou canst plane it off the wood, and begin another—that's thy meanin', is't?'

"I was very angry with him, for I was only about fifteen then, and I wanted to send my picture to a London exhibition."

"Why, I did see it down at Leatherhead!" said Von Rosen. "Was not that the picture on panel near the window of the dining-room?"

"There now!" said Titania to the girl, who could not quite conceal the pleasure she felt on hearing that the count had noticed this juvenile effort of hers, "come along, and let us see the library before we go into the open air again."

In the library, too, were more portraits and pictures, which these young people were much interested in. We found it impossible to drag them along. They would loiter in some corner or other, and then, when we forsook our civil attendant and went back for them, we found them deeply engrossed in some obscure portrait or buried in a huge parchment-bound folio which the lieutenant had taken out and opened. Bell was a fairly well-informed young woman, as times go, and knew quite as much of French literature as was good for her; but it certainly puzzled Tita and myself to discover what possible interest she could have in gazing upon the large pages of the Encyclopædia while the lieutenant talked to her about Diderot. Nor could it be possible that a young lady of her years and pursuits had imbibed so much reverence for original editions as to stand entranced before this or that well-known author whose earliest offspring had been laid hold of by her companion. They both seemed unwilling to leave this library, but Von Rosen explained the matter when he came out saying that he had never felt so keenly the proverbial impulses of an Uhlan as when he found himself with these valuable old books in his hand and only one attendant near. I congratulated the authorities of Christ Church College on what they had escaped.

Of course we went down to the river some little time after lunch, and had a look from Folly Bridge on the various oddly-assorted crews that had invaded the sacred waters of the Isis in the absence of the University men. When the lieutenant proposed that we too should get a boat and make a voyage down between the green meadows, it almost seemed as if we were venturing into a man's house in the absence of the owner; but then Bell very prettily and urgently added her supplications, and Tita professed herself not unwilling to give the young folks an airing on the stream. There were plenty of signs that it was vacation-time besides the appearance of the nondescript oarsmen. There was a great show of painting and scraping and gilding visible among that long line of mighty barges that lay under the shadow of the elms, moored to tall white poles that sent a line of silver down into the glassy and troubled water beneath. Barges in blue and barges in cream and gold, barges with splendid prows and Gorgon figure-heads, barges with steam-paddles, and light awnings over the upper deck, barges with that deck supported by pointed arches, as if a bit of an old cloister had been carried down to decorate a pleasure-boat,—all these resounded to the beating of hammers, and were being made bright with many colors. The University barge itself had been dragged out of the water, and was also undergoing the same process, although the cynical person who had put the cushions in our boat had just remarked, with something of a shrug, "I hope the mahn as has got the job 'll get paid for it, for the 'Varsity crew are up to their necks in debt—that's what they are!"

When once we had got away from Christ Church meadows, there were fewer obstructions in our course, but whether it was that the currents of the river defied the skill of our coxswain, or whether it was that the lieutenant and Bell, sitting together in the stern, were too much occupied in pointing out to each other the beauties of the scenery, we found ourselves with fatal frequency running into the bank, with the prow of the boat

hissing through the rushes and flags. Nevertheless, we managed to get up to Iffley, and there, having moored the boat, we proceeded to land and walk up to the old church on the brow of the hill.

"It's what they calls eerly English," said the old lady who showed us over the ancient building. She was not a talkative person: she was accustomed to get over the necessary information rapidly, and then spend the interval in looking strangely at the tall lieutenant and his brown beard. She did not betray any emotion when a small gratuity was given her. She had not even said "Thank you" when Von Rosen, on calling for the keys of the church, had found the gate of her garden unhinged, and had labored fully ten minutes in hammering a rusty piece of iron into the wooden post. Perhaps she thought it was Bell who had driven down the gate, but at all events she expressed no sense of gratitude for its restoration.

Near an old yew tree there was a small grave—new made and green with grass—on which some careful hand had placed a cross composed exclusively of red and white roses. This new grave, with these fresh evidences of love and kindly remembrance on it, looked strange in the rude old churchyard, where stones of unknown age and obliterated names lay tumbled about or stood awry among the weeds and grass. Yet this very disorder and decay, as Tita said gently, seemed to her so much more pleasant than the cold and sharp precision of the iron crosses in French and German graveyards, with their grim, fantastic decorations and wreaths of immortelles. She stood looking at this new grave and its pretty cross of roses, and at the green and weather-worn stones, and at the black old yew tree, for some little time, until Bell, who knows of something that happened when Tita was but a girl, and her brother scarcely more than a child, drew her gently away from us, toward the gate of the churchyard.

"Yes," said the lieutenant, not noticing, but turning to the only listener remaining, "that is true. I think your

English churchyards in the country are very beautiful, very picturesque, very pathetic indeed. But what you have not in this country are the beautiful songs about death that we have—not religious hymns, or anything like that, but small, little poems that the country-people know and repeat to their children. Do you know that one that says,

Hier schlummert das Herz,
Befreit von betäubenden Sorgen;
Es weckt uns kein Schmerz
Zu grösserem Schmerz.

And it ends this way:

Was weinstest denn du?
Ich trage nun muthig mein Leiden,
Und rufe mit Freuden,
Im Grabe ist Ruh'!

There was one of my comrades in the war—he was from my native place, but not in my regiment: he was a very good fellow—and when he was in the camp before Metz his companion was killed. Well, he buried him separate from the others, and went about till he got somewhere a gravestone, and he began to cut out, just with the end of a bayonet, these two verses on the stone. It took him many weeks to do it, and I did hear from one of my friends in the regiment that two days after he had put up the stone he was himself killed. Oh, it is very hard to have your companion killed beside you, and he is away from his friends; and when you go back home without him, they look at you as if you had no right to be alive and their son dead. That is very hard: I knew it in Sixty-six, when I went back to Berlin, and had to go to see old Madame von Hebel. I do hope never to have that again."

Is there a prettier bit of quiet riverscenery in the world than that around Iffley Mill? Or was it merely the glamour of the white day that rendered the place so lovely, and made us linger in the open stream to look at the mill and its surroundings? As I write there lies before me a pencil-sketch of Bell's, lightly dashed here and there with watercolor, and the whole scene is recalled. There is the dilapidated old stone building, with its red tiles, its crumbling plaster, its wooden projections and small windows, half hidden amid foliage. Far-

ther down the river there are clumps of rounded elms visible, but here around the mill the trees are chiefly poplars, of magnificent height, that stretch up lightly and gracefully into a quiet yellow sky, and throw gigantic lines of reflection down into the still water. Then out from the mill a small island runs into the stream; the wood-work of the sluiceways bridges the interval; there is a red cow amid the green leafage of the island, and here again are some splendid poplars rising singly up from the river-side. Then beyond there is another house, then a wooden bridge, a low line of trees, and the river, in a sharp curve, glimmers in the light and loses itself behind low-lying meadows and a marginal growth of willow and flag.

For very shame's sake, the big lieutenant was forced to offer to take Tita's oar as we once more proceeded on our voyage, but she definitely refused to endanger our lives by any such experiment. A similar offer on the part of Bell met with a similar fate. Indeed, when this little woman has once made up her mind to do a certain thing, the reserve of physical and intellectual vigor that lies within the slight frame and behind a smooth and gentle face shows itself to be extraordinary. Place before her some arithmetical conundrum that she must solve in order to question the boys, or give her an oar and engage her to pull for a certain number of miles, and the amount of patient perseverance and unobtrusive energy she will reveal will astonish most people. In the mean time, her task was easy. We were going with the stream. And so we glided on between the green banks, under the railway bridge, past the village of Kennington, past Rose Isle, with its bowers and tables and beer-glasses, and lounging young fellows in white trousers and blue jackets, and so on until we got up to Sandford Lock. Here also we fastened the boat to the bank close by the mill, and went ashore for half an hour's stroll. But while Tita made direct, as she generally does on entering a new village, for the church, the lieutenant went off in quest of her, and when we came back to the boat, he

had a wonderful story to tell us. He had made friends with some innkeeper or other, and had imbibed from him a legend which was a curious mixture of fact and inference and blunder. Von Rosen had doubtless mistaken much of the Oxfordshire *patois*, for how could any one make a reasonable narrative out of the following?—"And he told me it was a farmer's house in the village—the village of Sandford, I suppose—and while they took it down to repair it, they were lifting up the floors, and many strange things were there. And he said among the nonsense and useless rubbish they were finding there, was a hat; and the man brought the hat down to him, and he saw it was a chevalier's hat—"

"A cavalier's hat," suggested Bell, and the lieutenant assented.

"Then the farmer went up to the house, and he found some hidden letters, and one was to Ettrick—to some soldier who was then on a campaign at the river Ettrick in the north. And they found that it was in this very house that King Charles I. did cut off his beard and moustache—I suppose when he was flying from the Parliamentary army; but I am forgetting all about that history now, and the innkeeper was not sure about the battle. Well, then, the news was sent to London, and a gentleman came down who is the only surviving descender—descendant—of King Charles; and he took away the hat to London, and you will find it in the British Museum. It is a very curious story, and I would have come after you and showed you the house, but I suppose it is a new house now, and nothing to look at. But do you know when the king was in this neighborhood in escaping?"

Here was a poser for the women.

"I don't remember," says Tita, looking very profound, "to have seen anything about Oxford in Lord Clarendon's narrative of the king's escape after the battle of Worcester."

"My dear," said Bell, in accents of reproach, "that was Charles II."

"To be sure it was," returned Tita, with a gesture of impatience; "and he couldn't have come this way, for he went

to Bristol. But Charles I. was continually at Oxford—he summoned the Parliament to meet him here—"

"And shaved off his beard to curry favor with them," it is suggested.

"You needn't laugh. Of course, when he was finally defeated he fled from Oxford, and very probably disguised himself."

"And when did he fly, and whither?"

"To Scotland," said Bell triumphantly "and after the battle of Naseby."

"Good girl! And where is Naseby?"

"Well, if he fled north-east from the Parliamentary army, Naseby must be in the south-west; and so I suppose it is somewhere down about Gloucester."

"Professor Oswald, where is Naseby?"

"I do not know," says the lieutenant, "but I think it is more in the north, and not far from the country of your great man Hampden. But he was killed before then, I think."

"And pray," says Queen Tita, taking her seat and putting her oar into the rowlock, "will you please tell me what you think of those men—of Cromwell and Hampden and those—and what your historians say of them in Germany?"

"Why, they say all kinds of things about them," said the lieutenant lightly, not knowing that he was being questioned as a representative of the feudal aristocracy of a country in which the divine right of kings even yet exists—"just as your historians do here. But we know very well that England has got much of her liberty through that fight with the king, and yet you have been able to keep a balance and not let the lowest classes run riot and destroy your freedom. They were ambitious? Yes. If a man is in politics, does not he fight hard to make his side win? If he is a soldier, does not he like to be victorious? And if I could be king of England, do you not think I should like that very well, and try hard for it? But if these men had their own ambitions, and wanted to get fame and honor, I am sure they had much of righteousness and belief, and would not have fought in that way and overturned the king if they believed that was an injury to their country or to

their religion. And besides, what could this man or that man have done except he had a great enthusiasm of the nation behind him—if he did not represent a principle? But I have no right to speak of such things as if I were telling you of our German historians. That is only my guess, and I have read not much about it. But you must not suppose, because we in Germany have not the same political system that you have, that we cannot tell the value of yours, and the good it has done to the character of your people. Our German historians are many of them professors in universities, and they spend their lives in finding out the truth of such things; and do you think they care what may be the opinion of their own government about it? Oh no. They are very independent in the universities—much too independent, I think. It is very pleasant when you are a very young man to get into a university, and think yourself very wise, and go to extremes about politics, and say hard things of your own country; but when you come out into the world, and see how you have to keep your country from enemies that are not separated by the sea from you (as you are here in England), you see how bad are these principles among young men, who do not like to be obedient, and always want to hurry on new systems of government before they are possible. But you do not see much of those wild opinions when a war comes and the young men are marched together to save their country. Then they forget all the democratic notions of this kind: it is their heart that speaks, and it is on fire, and not one is ashamed to be patriotic, though he may have laughed at it a week before."

"It must be very hard," said Bell, looking wistfully at the river, "to leave your home and go into a foreign country, and know that you may never return."

"Oh no, not much," said the lieutenant, "for all your friends go with you. And you are not always in danger: you have much entertainment at times, especially when some fight is over, and all your friends meet again to have a sup-

per in the tent, and some one has got a bottle of cognac, and some one else has got a letter from home, full of gossip about people you know very well. And there is much fun, too, in riding over the country, and trying to find food and quarters for yourself and your horse. We had many good parties in the deserted farmhouses, and sometimes we caught a hen or a duck that the people had neglected to take, and then we kindled a big fire and fixed him on a lance, and roasted him well, feathers and all. Then we were very lucky to have a fire and good meat, and a roof to keep off the rain. But it was more dangerous in a house, for it was difficult to keep from sleeping after you had got warm and had eaten and drunk, and there were many people about ready to fire at you. But these are not heroic stories of a campaign, are they, mademoiselle?"

Nevertheless, mademoiselle seemed sufficiently interested, and as Tita and I pulled evenly back to Ifley and Oxford, she continually brought the lieutenant back to this subject by a series of questions. This modern maiden was as anxious to hear of the amusements of patrols and the hairbreadth escapes of daredevil sub-lieutenants as was Desdemona to listen to her lover's stories of battles, sieges, fortunes and moving accidents by flood and field.

That was a pleasant pull back to Oxford in the quiet of the summer afternoon, with the yellow light lying warmly over the level meadows and the woods. There were more people now along the banks of the river—come out for the most part in couples to wander along the pathway between the stream and the fields. Many of them had a good look at Bell, and the Radley boys, as they sent their long boats spinning down the river toward Sandford, were apparently much struck. Bell, unconscious of the innocent admiration of those poor boys, was attending much more to the talk of our Uhlman than to her tiller-ropes. As for him— But what man would not have looked contented under these conditions—to be strong, healthy, handsome, and only twenty-five; to have comfortable

means and an assured future; to have come out of a long and dangerous campaign with honor and sound limbs; to be off on a careless holiday through the most beautiful country, take it for all in all, in the world; and to be lying lazily in a boat on a summer's evening, on a pretty English river, with a pretty English girl showing her friendly interest and attention in every glance of her blue eyes?

You should have seen how naturally these two fell behind us, and formed a couple by themselves, when we had left the boat and were returning to our inn. But as we walked up to Carfax, Bell separated herself from us for a moment and went into the post-office. She was a considerable time there. When she came out she was folding up a letter which she had been reading.

"You have got your letter at last?" said Tita.

"Yes," said Bell gravely, but showing no particular gladness or disappointment.

At dinner she was rather reserved, and so, curiously enough, was the lieutenant. After dinner, when we were allowed half an hour by ourselves for a cigar, he suddenly said, "Why do you not interfere with that stupid young fellow?"

"Who?" I asked, in blank amazement.

"Why, that young fellow at Twickenham. It is quite monstrous, his impertinence. If I were the guardian of such a girl, I would kick him—I would throw him into the river and cool him there."

"What in all the world do you mean?"

"Why, you must know. The letter that Miss Bell did ask for more than once, it is from him; and now when it comes, it is angry, it is impertinent: she is nearly crying all the time at dinner. It is for some one to interfere and save her from this insult, this persecution—"

"Don't bite your cigar to pieces, but tell me, if you please, how you happen to know what was in the letter."

"She told me," said the lieutenant, with a stare.

"When?"

"Just before you came down to dinner. It is no business of mine—no, but when I see her vexed and disturbed, I asked her to tell me why. And then she said she had got this letter, which was a very cruel one to send. Oh, there is no mystery—none. I suppose he has a right to marry her—very well; but he is not married yet, and he must not be allowed to do this."

"Bell at least might have told me of it, or have confided in Tita—"

"Oh, she is telling her now, I dare say. And she will tell you too when there are not all of us present. It is no secret, or she would not have told me. Indeed, I think she was sorry about that; but she was very much vexed, and I asked her so plain that she answered me. And that is much better to have confidence between people, instead of keeping all such vexations to yourself. Then I ask her why he is angry, and she says only because she has gone away. Pfu! I have never heard such nonsense."

"My dear Oswald," I say to him, "don't you interfere between two young people who have fallen out, or you will suffer. Unless, indeed—"

"Unless what?"

"Unless they happen to be angels."

"Do you know this—that he is coming to see her?"

"Well, the phaeton can hold five at a pinch. Why should not we have an addition to our party?"

"Very good! I do not care. But if he is, rude to her, he will not be very long in the phaeton."

"Why, you stupid boy, you take those lovers' quarrels *au grand sérieux*. Do you think he has been positively rude to her? Nothing of the kind. He has been too well brought up for that, although he has a peevish temper. He might be with us all through the journey—"

"Jott bewahre!" exclaimed the count, with a kick at a cork that was lying on the carpet.

"—And these two might be at daggers drawn, and you would see nothing of it. Indeed, young people never get

extremely courteous to each other until they quarrel and stand on their dignity. Now, if you had seen that letter, you would have found it respectful and formal in the highest degree — perhaps a trifle sarcastic here and there, for the lad thinks he has a gift that way — but you would find no rhetorical indignation or invective."

The count threw his cigar into the grate. "They will be waiting for us," he said: "let us go."

We found Tita with the bezique-cards spread out before her. Bell looked up with rather a frightened air, apparently conscious that the lieutenant was likely to have spoken about what she had confided to him upon the impulse of a momentary vexation. However, we sat down.

The game was an open and palpable burlesque. Was Ferdinand very intent on giving checkmate when he played chess with Miranda in the cave? or was he not much more bent upon placing his king in extreme danger and offering his queen so that she had to be taken? The audacious manner in which this young lieutenant played his cards so as to suit Bell was apparent to every one, though no one dared speak of it, and Bell only blushed sometimes. When she timidly put forth a ten, he was sure to throw away another ten, although he had any amount of aces in his hand. He spoiled his best combinations rather than take tricks when it was clear she wanted to lead. Nay, as he sat next to her, he undertook the duty of marking her various scores, and the manner in which the small brass hand went circling round the card was singular, until Tita suddenly exclaimed, "Why, that is only a common marriage!"

"And do not you count forty for a common marriage?" he said, with a fine assumption of innocent wonder.

Such was the ending of our first day's rest; and then just before candles were lit a cabinet council was held to decide whether on the morrow we should choose as our halting-place Moreton-in-the-Marsh or Bourton-on-the-Hill. The more elevated site won the day.

CHAPTER VIII.

NEAR WOODSTOCK TOWN.

In olde dayes of the king Arthour,
Of which that Britons speake great honour,
All was this land full filled of faerie;
The Elf-queen, with her jolly company,
Danced full oft in many a green mede.
This was the old opinion, as I read;
I speak of many a hundred years ago;
But now can no man see no elves mo'.

THE phaeton stood in the High street of Oxford. Castor and Pollux, a trifle impatient after the indolence of the day before, were pawing the hard stones, their silken coats shining in the morning sunlight; Queen Titania had the reins in her hands; the tall waiter who had been a circus-rider was ready to smile us an adieu; and we were all waiting for the lieutenant, who had gone off in search of a map that Bell had forgotten.

If there is one thing more than another likely to ruffle the superhuman sweetness of my lady's temper, it is to be kept waiting in a public thoroughfare with a pair of rather restive horses under her charge. I began to fear for that young man. Tita turned once or twice to the entrance of the hotel; and at last she said, with an ominous politeness in her tone, "It does seem to me singular that Count von Rosen should be expected to look after such things. He is our guest. It is no compliment to give him the duty of attending to our luggage."

"My dear," said Bell, leaning over and speaking in very penitent tones, "it is entirely my fault. I am very sorry."

"I think he is much too good-natured," says Tita coldly.

At this Bell rather recedes, and says with almost equal coldness, "I am sorry to have given him so much trouble. In future I shall try to do without his help."

But when the count did appear, when he took his seat beside Tita, and we rattled up the High street and round by the Corn Market, and past Magdalen Church, and so out by St. Giles's road, the remembrance of this little preliminary skirmish speedily passed away. For once more we seemed to have left towns and streets behind us, and even while there were yet small villas and gardens by the side of the road, the air

that blew about on this bright morning seemed to have a new sweetness in it, and the freshness and pleasant odors of innumerable woods and fields. There was quite a new light, too, in Bell's face. She had come down stairs with an obvious determination to cast aside the remembrance of that letter. There was something even defiant in the manner in which she said—in strict confidence, be it observed—that if Arthur Ashburton did intend to come and meet us in some town or other, there was no use in being vexed about it in the mean time. We were now getting into the open country, where pursuit would be in vain. If he overtook us, it would be through the mechanism of railways. His only chance of obtaining an interview with Bell was to lie in wait for us in one of the big towns through which we must pass.

"But why," said the person to whom Bell revealed these matters—"why should you be afraid to meet Arthur? You have not quarreled with him."

"No," said Bell, looking down.

"You have done nothing that he can object to."

"He has no right to object, whatever I may do," she said with a gentle firmness. "But you know he is annoyed, and you cannot reason with him; and I am sorry for him—and—and—and what is the name of this little village on the left?"

Bell seemed to shake off this subject from her, as too vexatious on such a fine and cheerful morning.

"That is Woolvercot; and there is the road that leads down to Godstow, and the ruins of Godstow Nunnery, in which Rosamond Clifford lived and died."

"And I suppose she rode along this very highway," said Bell, "with people wondering at her beauty and her jewels, when she used to live at Woodstock. Yet it is a very ordinary-looking road."

Then she touched Tita on the shoulder. "Are we going to stop at Blenheim?" she asked.

"I suppose so," said our driver.

"I think we ought not," said Bell: "we shall be greatly disappointed if we do. For who cares about the duke of Marl-

borough, or Sir John Vanbrugh's architecture? You know you will be looking about the trees for the old knight with the white beard, and for Alice Lee, and for pretty Phœbe Mayflower, and for Wildrake and the soldiers. Wouldn't it be better to go past the walls, Tita, and fancy that all these old friends of ours are still walking about inside in their picturesque costume? If we go inside, we shall only find an empty park and a big house, and all those people gone away, just like the fairies who used to be in the woods."

"But what are the people you are speaking of?" said the count. "Is it from history or from a romance?"

"I am not quite sure," said Bell, "how much is history and how much is romance, but I am sure we know the people very well; and very strange things happened inside the park that we shall pass by and by. There was a pretty young lady living there, and a very sober and staid colonel was her lover. The brother of this young lady was much attached to the fortunes of the Stuarts, and he brought the young Prince Charles in disguise to the house; and all the gratitude shown by the prince was that he began to amuse himself by making love to the sister of the man who had risked his life to save him. And of course the grave colonel discovered it, and he even drew his sword upon Prince Charles—"

"I beg your pardon, mademoiselle," said the lieutenant, "but do not trouble to tell me the story, for I know it very well. I did read it in Germany years ago; and I think if Colonel Esmond had thrashed the prince—"

"Oh no, you are mistaken," said Bell, with some wonder: "it is Colonel Markham, not Colonel Esmond; and the brother of the young lady succeeded in getting the prince away just before Cromwell had time to seize him."

"Cromwell!" said our lieutenant, thoughtfully. "Ah! then it is another story. But I agree with you, mademoiselle: if you believe in these people very much, do not go into the park or you will be disappointed."

"As you please," said Tita, with a smile.—I began to observe that when the two young folks agreed about anything, Tita became nothing more than an echo to their wishes.

At length we came to the walls that surrounded the great park. Should we leave all its mysteries unexplored? If one were to clamber up and peep over, might not strange figures be seen, in buff coats and red, with bandoleers and helmets; and an aged knight with a laced cloak, slashed boots and long sword; countrywomen in white hoods and black gowns; divines with tall Presbyterian hats and solemn visage; a braggart and drunken soldier of the king, and a colonel the servant of Cromwell? Or might not Queen Elizabeth be descried, looking out as a prisoner on the fair domains around her? Or might not Chaucer be found loitering under those great trees that he loved and celebrated in his verse? Or behind that splendid wall of chestnuts and elms was it not possible that Fair Rosamond herself might be walking all alone, passing like a gleam of light through the green shadows of the trees, or sitting by the well that still bears her name, or reading in the heart of that bower that was surrounded by cunning ways? Was it along this road that Eleanor came? Or did Rosamond, surviving all her sin and her splendor, sometimes walk this way with her sister-nuns from Godstow, and think of the time when she was mistress of a royal palace and this spacious park?

We drove into the town of Woodstock. The handful of houses thrown into the circular hollow that is cut in two by the river Glym was as silent as death. In the broad street that plunged down into the valley scarcely a soul was to be seen, and even about the old town-hall there were only some children visible. Had the play been played out, and the actors gone for ever? When King Henry was fighting in France or in Ireland, doubtless Rosamond, left all by herself, ventured out from the park, and walked down into the small town, and revealed to the simple folks the wonders of her face, and talked to them.

No mortal woman could have remained in a bower month after month without seeing any one but her attendants. Doubtless, too, the people in this quaint little town were very loyal toward her, and would have espoused her cause against a dozen Eleanors. And so it happened, possibly, that when the romance came to an end, and Rosamond went to hide her shame and her penitence in the nunnery of Godstow, all the light and color went out of Woodstock, and left it dull and gray and silent as it is to this day.

The main street of Woodstock, that dips down to the banks of the Glym, rises as abruptly on the other side, and once past the turnpike the highway runs along an elevated ridge, which on the one side is bounded by a continuation of Blenheim Park, and on the other slopes down to a broad extent of level meadows. When we had got up to this higher ground, and found before us an illimitable stretch of country, with ourselves as the only visible inhabitants, the lieutenant managed to introduce a remote hint about a song which he had heard Bell humming in the morning.

"I think it was about Woodstock," he said; "and if you will please to sing it now as we go along, I shall get out for you the guitar."

"If you will be so kind," said Bell, quite submissively.

What had become of the girl's independence? Asked to sing a song at great trouble to herself—for who cares to play a guitar in the back seat of a phaeton, and with two pairs of wheels rumbling an accompaniment?—she meekly thanks him for suggesting it! Nay, it was becoming evident that the girl was schooling herself into docility. She had almost entirely dropped the wild phrases and startling metaphors that so deeply shocked Tita. Sometimes they dropped out inadvertently, and sometimes, too, she gave way to those impulsive, imaginative flights that led her unthinkingly into an excitement of talk which Tita used to regard with a sort of amused wonder. But of late all these things were gradually disappear-

ing. She was less abrupt, independent, wayward in her manner. She waited more patiently to receive suggestions from others. She was becoming a good listener, and she received meekly criticisms that would but a short time before have driven her into a proud and defiant silence, or provoked some rejoinder a good deal more apt than gentle. It was very odd to mark this amiable self-discipline struggling with her ordinary frank impetuosity, although somehow, it is true, the latter had the best of it.

On this occasion, when the lieutenant had jumped down and got out the guitar for her, she took it very obediently, and then Tita sent on the horses once more. Of course you know the ballad that Bell naturally sang, seeing where she was at the moment, and the sort of music she was most familiar with.

Near Woodstock Town I chanced to stray,
When birds did sing and fields were gay,

she sang, telling the story of the forlorn damsel who was found weeping for her faithless lover, who only wished that he might come and visit her again, and think of her as "one who loved, but could not hate." Perhaps this old-fashioned ballad is not a masterly composition, but the music of it is expressive enough; and we who were familiar with Bell's ballads had got into a habit of not caring much what she sang, so long as she only continued singing.

"You would make your fortune by singing," said Tita as Bell finished.

"Perhaps," said the girl, "if all my audience were like you. But I think you must have been lent out as an infant to an old woman with an organ, and so, by merely sitting on the vibrating wood, you have become so sensitive to music that anything at all pleases you."

"No, mademoiselle," said the lieutenant, "you do yourself an injustice. I never heard a voice like yours, that has the tremble of a zither in it, and is much softer than a zither."

Bell blushed deeply, but to conceal her embarrassment she said lightly to Tita, "And how am I to make my fortune? Oh, I know—by coming in after

public dinners to sing grace and follow the toasts with a glee. I am in white silk, with a blue ribbon round my neck, white gloves, bracelets and a sheet of music. There is an elderly lady in black velvet and white pearls, who smiles in a pleasant manner: she sings, and is much admired by the long rows of gentlemen—they have just dined, you know, and are very nice and amiable. Then there is the tenor, fair and smooth, with diamond rings, a lofty expression and a cool and critical eye, that shows he is quite accustomed to all this. Then there is the stout, red-bearded man who sings last, and plays the piano for the four of us, and is very fierce in the way he thumps out his enthusiasm about the Queen, and the Navy, and the Army, and the Volunteers. What a happy way of living that must be! They will give us a fine dinner beforehand—in a room by ourselves, perhaps; and all we have to do is to return thanks for it in an emotional way, so that all the waiters shall stand round in a reverential manner. But when that is over, then we introduce a few songs, sprightly, coquettish songs, and the gentlemen are vastly amused; and you think—"

"Well, what do you think?" said I, seeing that Bell rather hesitated.

"I think," said Tita with a smile, "that you are very ungenerous, Bell, in remembering so much of what you saw the other night from the gallery of the Freemasons' Tavern. Is it fair to recall, in open daylight, in the cool forenoon, the imbecile good-nature and exuberant loyalty of a lot of gentlemen who have just dined? I wonder how many of the husbands there told their wives what sums they signed away under the influence of the wine?"

"I dare say," says one of the party, "that the wives would be sorry to see so much money go in charity which might otherwise have been squandered in millinery and extravagances."

"Don't be ill-tempered, my dear," says Queen Tita, graciously. "Women are quite as charitable as men, and they don't need a guinea dinner to make them think of other people. That is a sort of

charity that begins at home. Pray, how much did *you* put down?"

"Nothing."

"I thought so. Go to a charity dinner, enjoy yourself, and come away without giving a farthing! You would not find women doing that."

"Only because they have not the courage."

"They have plenty of courage in other directions—in getting married, for example, when they know what men are."

"Knowing that, is it not a pity they choose to make martyrs of themselves? Indeed, their anxiety to become martyrs is astonishing. But what if I say that in the next published list of subscriptions you will find my name down for about as much as your last millinery bill came to?"

"I think that a good deal more likely, for I know the state of philanthropy into which men get at a public dinner—fathers of families who ought to remember their own responsibilities, and who are impatient enough if any extra bit of comfort or kindness is wanted for their own kith and kin."

"Some such trifling matter as a fur cloak, for instance, that is bought out of a Brighton shop-window for sixty-five guineas, and is only worn twice or thrice, because some other woman has the neighbor of it."

"That is not true. You *know* the weather changed."

"The weather! what weather? Were you at Brighton at the time?"

Titania did not reply for a considerable time. Perhaps she was thinking of some crushing epigram, but at all events Bell endeavored to draw her away from the subject by pointing out another river, and asking whether this or the Glym at Woodstock was the stream associated with the "Oxfordshire-Tragedy" she had just been singing. We discovered, however, that this small stream was also the Glym, which here winds round and through the marshy country that Thomas Warton described.*

* Within some whispering osier isle,
Where Glym's low banks neglected smile,
And each trim meadow still retains
The wintry torrent's oozy stains;

Bell came to the conclusion that the banks by the river at this part were not sufficiently picturesque for the scene of the song, where the love-lorn heroine sits and weeps by a glassy stream, and complains that her lover is now wooing another maid.

Meanwhile, my lady had given expression to the rebellious thoughts passing through her mind, by admonishing Castor and Pollux slightly, and these accordingly were going forward at a rattling pace. We "took" Enstone. We dashed along the level highway that lies on the high ground between the Charlford Farms and Heythrop Park. We sent the dust flying behind us in clouds as we cut down to Chipping Norton; and there, with a fine sweep, we sprung up the incline of the open square, clattered over the stones in front of the White Hat Inn, and pulled up with a noise that considerably astonished the quiet village.

This large open space gives to Chipping Norton a light and agreeable appearance, and on entering the big tall inn that looks down over the square, we found everything very cleanly, bright and comfortable. The very maid-servant who served us with lunch was a model of maid-servants, and was a very handsome young woman besides, with shining light-blue eyes and yellow hair. The lieutenant at once entered into a polite conversation with her, and she informed him, in answer to his respectful inquiries, that she had just come from Folkestone.

"From Folkestone! that is a seaport, a busy place, a large town, is it not?"

"Yes, there *was* some business doing there," said the maid, with an inflection of voice which rather cast discredit on Chipping Norton.

"Don't you find this place dull?" he asked.

"Well, I can't say the people seem

Beneath a willow, long forsook,
The fisher seeks his 'custom'd nook,
And bursting through the crackling sedge,
That crowns the current's caverned edge,
He startles from the bordering wood
The bashful wild-duck's early brood.

Ode to the First of April.

to worry themselves much," she replied with a slight curl of the lip.

"That is very good for the health," said the count gravely. "Now I do think you have a very nice and even temper, that does not irritate you—"

But here Queen Titania and her companion came into the room, and the conversation ceased, for the lieutenant had at once to spring up and take charge of the books, maps and scarfs that Bell had brought in with her. And then, when we sat down to lunch, he was entirely engrossed in attending to her wants, in-somuch that he was barely civil to the more elderly lady who had from the first been his champion. As for Bell, what had become of her dislike to officers, her antipathy to the German race, her horror of Uhlans? That very morning I had heard on good authority that Bell had been asking in confidence whether England did not owe a great debt to Germany for the gift of Protestantism which that country had sent us. "And were not the Prussians mostly Protestant?" asked Bell. What answer was returned I do not know, for Queen Titania is strong on the point that the word "Protestant" is not scriptural.

"But I have quite forgotten to tell you," remarked the lieutenant, "that this morning, when I was walking about in Oxford, I came into the theatre. I saw some bills up. I went along a strange passage: I found an iron gate, and much lime and stone, and things like that. A man came: I asked him if I could see the theatre, and he took me into the place, which they are repairing now. Oh, it is a very dingy place—small, tawdry, with ridiculous scenes, and the decorations of the galleries very amusing and dirty. Why, in an old city, with plenty of rich and intelligent people, you have such a pitiful little theatre: it is only fit for a country green and wandering actors. In a great university town you should have the theatre supported by the colleges and the bequests, and hire good actors, and play all the best dramas of your great writers. That would be good education—that would be a good compliment to pay to your

great dramatists. But here, in a city where you have much learning, much money, much of your young men of good families being educated, you have only a dingy small show; and I suppose it is farces they play, and wretched dramas, for the townspeople and the farmers. That is not much respect shown to your best authors by your learned institutions."

"No wonder students find the milliners' shops more attractive," said Queen Titania with a smile.

"But I think there is always much interest in an empty theatre," continued the lieutenant. "I did go all over this poor little building, and saw how it imitated the deceptions of fine theatres in a coarse manner. I saw the rude scenes, the bad traps, the curious arrangements, which I do not think can differ much from the theatre which Shakespeare himself described, where a man was made to represent a city, if I am right."

"You are familiar with the arrangements of a theatre, I suppose?" I say to the lieutenant.

"Pray tell me if you saw anything else in Oxford this morning," says Tita hastily.

"I suppose you could produce a pantomime yourself?" I observe to the young man.

"Did you visit any more of the colleges?" says Tita at the same moment.

"Or get up a ballet?"

"Or go down to the Isis again?"

Von Rosen was rather bewildered, but at last he stammered out, "No, madame, I did not go down to the river this morning. I walked from the theatre to the hotel, for I remained much too long in the theatre. Yes; I know something about the interior of theatres. I have been great friends with the managers and actors, and took great interest in it. I used to be much behind the stage—every night at some times; and that is very curious to a young man who likes to know more than other people, and thinks himself wise not to believe in delusions. I think it is Goethe who has made many of our young men like to know stage-managers and help to ar-

range pieces. But I find that they always end by being very much in love with one of the young ladies, and then they get not to like the theatres, for they do not wish everybody to admire her and be allowed to look at her. This is very good for the theatre, however; for they take many boxes, and ask their friends to accompany them, and that pays better than to let out the seats by the year to families. Some of the young men make light of this; others are more melancholy; but afterward they have much interest in some theatres merely for the sake of the old associations."

"Oh, Bell," exclaimed Tita, turning anxiously to our companion, "did you see that your guitar was properly put away, or has it been left lying openly in the phaeton?"

"I did put it away, madame," said the lieutenant.

"Oh, thank you!" said Tita. "I am sure if some of those ostlers were to have their curiosity aroused, we should have no more music all the journey."

And thus, having got the lieutenant away from rambling reminiscences of theatres, the little woman took very good care he did not return to them; and so we finished luncheon without any catastrophe having happened. Bell had been sitting very quietly during these revelations, scarcely lifting her eyes from the table, and maintaining an appearance of studied indifference. Why should she care about the mention of any actress or any dozen of actresses? My lady's anxiety was obviously unnecessary.

CHAPTER IX.

A MOONLIGHT NIGHT.

Till the livelong daylight fail;
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
With stories told of many a feat,
How fiery Mab the junkets eat.

CHIPPING NORTON is supplied with all the comforts of life. Before leaving for the more inhospitable regions in which we were to pass the night, we take a leisurely walk through the curious little town, that is loosely scattered over the

side of a steep hill. Here civilization has crowded all its results together, and Queen Tita is asked whether she could not forsake the busy haunts of men, and exchange that hovering between Leatherhead and London which constitutes her existence for a plain life in this small country town.

"Chemists' shops abound. There is a subscription reading-room. There are co-operative stores. A theatre invites you to amusement. You may have *Lloyd's News*, various sorts of sewing-machines, and the finest sherry from the wood—"

"Along with a Wesleyan chapel," she says, with a supercilious glance at the respectable if somewhat dull-looking little building that fronts the main street.

There is no reply possible to this ungracious sneer, for who can reason, as one of us hints to her, with a woman who would spend a fortune in incense, if only she had it, and who would rejoice to run riot in tall candles?

Bell takes us away from Chipping Norton, the lieutenant sitting beside her to moderate the vehemence of her pace in the event of her getting into a difficulty. First, the road dips down by a precipitous street, then it crosses a hollow in which there are some buildings of a manufactory, a tiny river and a strip of common or meadow, and then it ascends to the high country beyond by a steep hill. On the summit of this hill we give the horses a rest for a few seconds, and turn to look at the small town that lies underneath us in the valley. There is a faint haze of blue smoke rising from the slates and tiles. The deadened tolling of a bell marks the conclusion of another day's labor, for already the afternoon is wearing on apace; and so we turn westward again, and set out upon the lofty highway that winds onward toward the setting sun. Small hamlets fringe the road at considerable intervals, while elsewhere our route lies between stretches of heath and long fields. And still the highway ascends, until we reach the verge of a great slope; and, behold! there lies before us a great landscape, half in gloom, half in the dusky yellow light of the evening. And

over there, partly shutting out the dark lines of hills in the west, a great veil of rain stretches from the sky to the earth, and through it the sun is shining as through ground glass. But so far away is this pale sheet of yellow mist that we seem to be above it, and over the level and dark landscape on which it descends; and, indeed, where this veil ends the sunlight sends forth long shafts of radiance that light up level tracts of the distant and wooded country. What fate is to befall us when we get down into this plain and go forward in search of the unknown hostelry at which we are to pass the night?

"I hope the rain will not spread," says Bell, who had been telling us of all the wonders we should find at Bourton-on-the-Hill; "but even if it does rain to-night, we shall be as well off on a hill as in a swamp."

"But at Moreton-in-the-Marsh," says Tita, "there is sure to be a comfortable inn, for it is a big place; whereas Bourton-on-the-Hill appears to be only a small village, and we may find there only a public-house."

"But suppose it should clear?" says Bell. "The moon will be larger to-night, and then we can look down on all this level country from the top of the hill. We have not had a night-walk for a long time, and it will be so much more pleasant than being down in the mists of a marsh."

"And you are prepared to sleep on a couple of chairs in the smoking-room of a public-house?" I ask of Miss Bell.

"I dare say we shall get accommodation of some kind," she replies very meekly.

"Oh, I am quite sure mademoiselle is right, there is so much more adventure in going to this small place on the top of a hill," cried the lieutenant.

Of course mademoiselle was right: mademoiselle was always right now. And when that was understood, Queen Titania never even attempted to offer an objection, so that in all affairs pertaining to our trip the rude force of numbers triumphed over the protests of an oppressed and long-suffering minority.

But only change the relative positions, and then what a difference there was! When the lieutenant hinted in the remotest way that Bell might do so and so with the horses, she was all attention. For the first time in her career she allowed the interests of justice to moderate her partiality for Pollux. That animal, otherwise the best of horses, was a trifle older than his companion, and had profited by his years so far as to learn a little cunning. He had got into a trick accordingly of allowing Castor—the latter being younger and a good deal "freer"—to take more than his share of the work. Pollux had acquired the art of looking as if he were perpetually straining at the collar, while all the time he was letting his neighbor exercise to the full that willingness which was his chief merit. Now, Bell had never interfered to alter this unequal division of labor. Queen Tita knew well how to make the older horse do his fair share, but Bell encouraged him in his idleness, and permitted his companion to work out of all reason. Now, however, when the lieutenant pointed out the different action of the horses, and said she should moderate the efforts of the one, while waking up the other to a sense of his duties, she was quite obedient. When the whip was used at all—which was seldom enough, for both horses were sufficiently free—it was Pollux that felt the silk. The lieutenant fancied he was giving Bell lessons in driving, whereas he was merely teaching her submissiveness.

That golden sheet of rain had disappeared in the west, and the yellow light had sunk farther and farther down behind far bands of dark cloud. A gray dusk was falling over the green landscape, and the birds were growing mute in the woods and the hedges. In the pervading silence we heard only the patter of the horses' feet and the light rolling of the phaeton, as we sped onward down the long slopes and along the plain. We passed Four-shire Stone, the adjacent shires being Worcester, Warwick, Gloucester and Oxford; and then, getting on by a piece of common, we rattled into a long and straggling

village, with one or two large and open thoroughfares.

Moreton-in-the-Marsh was asleep, and we left it asleep. There were still a few men lounging about the corner public-house, but the women and children had all retired into the cottages from the chill night air. In some of the windows the light of a candle was visible. The dark elms behind the houses were growing darker.

Between Moreton and Bourton you plunge still deeper into this great and damp valley, and the way lies through a rich vegetation which seems to have thriven well in this low situation. The hedges along the roadside are magnificent; the elms behind them constitute a magnificent avenue extending for nearly a couple of miles; all around are dense woods. As we drove rapidly through this country, it almost seemed as though we could see the white mists around us, although the presence of the vapor was only known to us by the chilling touch of the air. On this July night we grew cold. Tita hoped there would be a fire at the hostelry on the top of the mountain, and she besought Bell to muffle up her throat, so that we should not be deceived of our ballads by the way.

At last we beheld the hill before us.

"It is not very like the Niessen," says Tita.

"But I have no doubt there is a very good inn at the top," remarks the lieutenant, "for after this hill the people would naturally stop to rest their horses."

"And we shall get up to see the sun rise, as we did on the Niessen?" asks Bell with a fine innocence, for she knows the opinions of some of us on the subject of early rising. "Do you remember the fat little woman who had walked up all by herself, and who came out by herself in the morning, and appealed to us all to tell her the names of the mountains, that she might write them down?"

"And how oddly she turned up again at nearly every railway-station we stopped at, with all her luggage around her!" says Tita.

"I believe," says Bell, "she is still sailing all through Europe on a shoal of

bandboxes and portmanteaus. I wish I could draw the fat little woman balancing herself in that circle of luggage, you know, and floating about comfortably and placidly like a bottle bobbing about in the sea. She may have drifted up to St. Petersburg by this time."

"I think *we* have," says the lieutenant, who is leading the horses up the steep hill, and who rubs his chilled hands from time to time.

We reach the centre of the straggling line of houses which must be Bourton, and behold! there is no inn. In the dusk we can descry the tower of a small church, and here the cottages thicken into the position which ought to be dominated by an inn, but there is no sign of any such thing. Have we climbed this precipitous steep, and have Castor and Pollux laboriously dragged our phaeton and luggage up, all for nothing? The count asks a startled villager, who points to a wayside house standing at the higher extremity of the row. Where is the familiar signboard, or the glowing bar, or the entrance to the stables? Von Rosen surrenders his charge of the horses and walks into the plain-looking house. It is an inn. We begin to perceive in the dusk that a small board over the doorway bears the name of "SETH DYDE." We find, however, instead of a landlord, a landlady—a willing, anxious and energetic woman, who forthwith sets to work to take our party into this odd little place. For dinner or supper, just as we choose to call it, she will give us ham and eggs, with either tea or beer. She will get two bedrooms for us, and perhaps the single gentleman will accept a shake-down in the parlor. In that room a fire is lit in a trice, a lamp is brought in, and presently the cheerful blaze in the huge fireplace illuminates the curious old-fashioned chamber, with its carpets and red table-cloth and gloomy furniture. A large tray appears—an ornamental teapot is produced. Sounds are heard of attendants whipping through the place, so anxious and so dexterous is this good woman. And Queen Tita, who is merciless in one respect, examines the cups,

saucers, forks and knives, and deigns to express her sense of the creditable cleanliness and order of the solitary inn.

Meanwhile, the horses.

"Oh," says the lieutenant, coming in out of the dark, "I have found a famous fellow—the first man I have seen in England who does his work well with grooming a horse. He is an excellent fellow—I have seen nothing like it. The horses are well off this night, I can assure you: you will see how good they look to-morrow morning."

"It is strange so good an ostler should be found here," said my lady.

"But he is not an ostler," said the lieutenant, rubbing his hands at the fire: "he is a groom to some gentleman near. The ostler is away. He does his work as a favor, and he does it so that I think the gentleman must keep some racing horses."

"How do you manage to find out all these things about the people you meet?" asked Titania with a gracious smile.

"Find out!" replied the tall young man, with his blue eyes staring. "I do not think I find out any more than others. It is people talk to you. And it is better to know a little of a man you give your horses to; and there is some time to talk when you are seeing after the horses; and so that is perhaps why they tell me."

"But you have not to see about horses when you are in a bookseller's shop at nine in the morning, and the young lady there tells you about the milliners' shops and the students," says my lady.

"Oh, she was a very nice girl," remarks the lieutenant, as if that were sufficient explanation.

"But you talk to every one, whether they are young ladies or innkeepers or grooms: is it to perfect your pronunciation of English?"

"Yes, that is it," said the young man, probably glad to arrive at any solution of the problem.

"Then you ought not to speak to ostlers."

"But there is no ostler who talks so very bad as I do: I know it is very, very bad—"

"I am *sure* you are mistaken," says

Bell quite warmly, but looking down: "I think you speak very good English; and it is a most difficult language to pronounce, and I am sure there are few Germans who can speak it as freely as you can."

"All that is a very good compliment, mademoiselle," he said, with a laugh that caused Bell to look rather embarrassed. "I am very glad if I could think that, but it is impossible. And as for freedom of speaking—oh yes, you can speak freely, comfortably, if you are going about the country and meeting strangers, and talking to any one, and not caring whether you mistake or not; but it is different when you are in a room with very polite English ladies who are strangers to you, and you are introduced, and you do not know how to say those little sentences that are proper to the time. That is very difficult, very annoying. But it is very surprising the number of your English ladies who have learned German at school, while the French ladies, they know nothing of that or of anything that is outside Paris. I do think them the most useless of women—very nice to look at, and very charming in their ways perhaps, but not sensible, honest, frank, like the English women, and not familiar with the seriousness of the world, and not ready to see the troubles of other people. But your English woman, who is very frank to be amused, and can enjoy herself when there is a time for that—who is generous in time of trouble, and is not afraid, and can be firm and active, and yet very gentle, and who does not think always of herself, but is ready to help other people, and can look after a house and manage affairs,—that is a better kind of woman, I think, more to be trusted, more of a companion. Oh, there is no comparison!"

All this time the lieutenant was busy stirring up the fire and placing huge lumps of coal on the top, and he had obviously forgotten that he was saying these things to two English women. Queen Titania seemed rather amused, and kept looking at Bell: Bell said nothing, but pretended to be arranging

the things on the table. When the lieutenant came back from the fire, he had apparently forgotten his complimentary speech, and was regarding with some curiosity the mighty dish of ham and eggs that had come in for our supper.

That was a very comfortable and enjoyable repast. When the chill of driving through the fogs of the plain had worn off, we found that it was not so very cold up here on the hill. A very liberal and honest appetite seemed to prevail, and there was a tolerable attack made on the ample display of ham and eggs. As for the beer that our lieutenant drank, it is not fair to tell stories. He said it was good beer, to begin with. Then he thought it was excellent beer. At length he said he had not tasted better since he left London.

Women become accustomed to many things during the course of a rambling journey like this. You should have seen how naturally Queen Tita brought forth the bezique-cards directly after dinner, and how unthinkingly Bell fetched some matches from the mantelpiece and placed them on the table. My lady had wholly forgotten her ancient horror of cigar-smoke: in any case, as she pointed out, it was other people's houses we were poisoning with the odor. As for Bell, she openly declared that she enjoyed the scent of cigars, and that in the open air, on a summer evening, it was as pleasant to her as the perfume of the wild roses or the campions.

However, there was no bezique. We fell to talking. It became a question as to which could find the freshest phrases and the strongest adjectives to describe his or her belief that this was the only enjoyable fashion of traveling. The abuse that was poured upon trains, stations, railway porters, and the hurry of cabs in the morning was excessive. Time-tables of all sorts were spoken of with an animosity which was wonderful to observe when it came along with the soft and pleasant undertones of our Bonny Bell's voice. Tita said she should never go abroad any more. The lieutenant vowed that England was the most delightful country in the world to

drive through. The present writer remarked that the count had much to see yet; whereupon the foolish young man declared he could seek for no pleasanter days than those he had just spent, and wished, with some unnecessary emphasis, that they might go on for ever. At this moment Bell rose and went to the window.

Then we heard an exclamation. Looking round, we found the shutters open, and lo! through the window we could see a white glare of moonlight falling into the empty thoroughfare, and striking on the wall on the other side of the way.

"It cannot be very cold outside," remarks the young lady.

"Bell!" cries Queen Tita, "you don't mean to go out at this time of night?"

"Why not, madame?" says the lieutenant. "Was it not agreed upon before we came up the hill? And when could you get a more beautiful night? I am sure it will be more beautiful than the sunrise from the top of the Niessen."

"Oh, if you think so," says my lady, with a gentle courtesy, "by all means let us go out for a little walk."

That is the way affairs began to be ordered about to suit the fancies of those young nincompoops. What little vestige of authority remained with the eldest of the group was exerted to secure a provision of shawls and rugs. Bell was not loth. She had a very pretty gray shawl. She had also a smart little gray hat which suited it; and as the hat was trimmed with blue, the gray shawl could not have a prettier decoration than the blue ribbon of the guitar. Who proposed it I cannot say, but Bell had her guitar with her when we went out into the bright wonder of the moonlight.

Bourton-on-the-Hill was now a mass of glittering silver and sharp, black shadows. Below us we could see the dark towers of the church, gleaming gray on the one side; then a mass of houses in deep shadow, with a radiance shining from their tiles and slates; then the gray road down the hill, and on the side of it this wall, with its flints sparkling. But when we got quite to the summit, and

clambered on to a small piece of common where were some felled trees, what words can describe the extraordinary view that lay around us? The village and its small church seemed to be now halfway down the hill, whereas the great plain of the landscape seemed to have risen high up on the eastern horizon, where the almost invisible stars met the dark woods of Oxfordshire. Over this imposing breadth of wood and valley and meadow, with its dark lines of trees, its glimmerings of farmhouses and winding streams, the flood of moonlight lay so softly that the world itself seemed to have grown clear from underneath. There were none of the wild glares of white surfaces and the ebony blackness of shadows which threw everything around us into sharp outline, but a far-reaching and mellow glamour that showed us the mists lying along the river-tracks, and only revealed to us the softened outlines and configurations of the land. If there had been a ruddy light in Moreton-in-the-Marsh, we should have seen it; but the distant village seemed dead, and it, as well as all the great tract of wooded country around it, was whitened over by this softened and silent and almost sepulchral radiance that lay somehow between the dark blue vault overhead and the vast plain beneath. It was but a young moon, but the exceeding rarity of the air lent strength to its radiance.

"Does not moonlight give you the impression that you can hear far?" said Bell in a rather low voice, as if the silence and the stars had overawed her. "It is like frost. You fancy you could hear bells ringing a hundred miles across the clear air."

"Mademoiselle, you will let us hear your singing in this stillness?" said the lieutenant.

"No, I cannot sing now," she said, and the very gentleness of her voice forbade him to ask again.

We passed along the road. The night air was sweet with the odor of flowers. Out in the west, where the moonlight was less strong, the stars were faintly twinkling. Not a breath of wind stirred,

and yet it seemed to us that if any sound had been uttered all over the world, it must have been carried to us on this height. We were as gods up here in the cold sky and the moonlight, and far over the earth sleep had sealed the lips and the eyes of those poor creatures who had forgotten their sorrows for a time. Should we send them dreams to sweeten their lives by some glimpses of a world different from their own, and cause them to awaken in the morning with some reminiscence of the trance in their softened memories? Or would it not be better to drown them in the fast and hard sleep of fatigue, so that the dawn might bring them a firmer heart and no vanity of wishes? Gods as we were, we had no care for ourselves. It was enough to be. Could not the night last for ever, and keep us up here near the stars, and give us content and an absolute want of anxiety for the morrow? For Queen Titania seemed to wander on as if she were in an enchanted garden, followed by a black shadow on the gleaming white road; and her face, with all its gentleness and delicacy, seemed to have gained something of a pale and wistful tenderness as the white light shone down over the dark woods and crossed our path. As for Bell— But who can describe the grace of the figure that walked before us, the light touching the gray shawl and the fine masses of brown hair that hung all around the shapely neck and the flat, small shoulders? We four were in England, sure enough, but it seemed to us then that we were very much alone, and about as near to the starry world as to the definite landscape lying far away on the plain.

We turned, however, when it was found that the road did not lead to any view of the western country. It seemed to run along a high level, cutting through between sand-pits, farms and woods; and so we made our way back to the bit of common overlooking Bourton, and there we had a few minutes' rest before getting into the small inn, whose windows were gleaming red into the white moonlight.

"Now you must sing to us something, mademoiselle," said the lieutenant; "and

here is a fine big tree cut down, that we can all sit on; and you shall appear as Apollo in disguise, charming the natives of this landscape with your song."

"But I do not know anything that Apollo sang," said Bell, sitting down nevertheless, and taking the guitar from her companion.

"That is no matter. You must think yourself some one else: why not Zerlina, in this strange place, and you see Fra Diavolo sitting alone on the rock, and you sing of him? This is a very good place for highwaymen. I have no doubt they have sat here and watched the gentleman's carriage come up the road beneath; and then, hey! with a rush and a flourish of pistols and a seizing of the horses, and madame shrieks in the carriage, and her husband, trembling but talking very brave, gives up his money, and drives on with much swearing, but very contented to have no hurt."

"You are very familiar with the ways of highway robbers," said Bell with a smile.

"Mademoiselle, I am an Uhlan," he replied gravely.

Two at least of the party startled the midnight air with their laughter over this unintentional rebuke, but Bell, conscious of past backslidings, seemed rather discomfited, and hastened to say that she would, if he pleased, sing the song in which Zerlina describes the bandit.

She sang it, too, very charmingly in that strange silence. Knowing that we could not well see her face, she lent herself to the character, and we could hear the terror of Zerlina thrilling through her experiences of the dreaded Diavolo. "Diavolo! Diavolo!" the dark woods around us seemed to say; "Diavolo! Diavolo!" throbbed the bass strings of the guitar, and the girl's voice trembled in its low tones as she pronounced the name. If any lonely stranger had been passing along the highway at this hour, what would he have thought of this strange thing—a beautiful girl seated overhead, amid the stars apparently, with the moonlight striking on her exquisite face and her masses of hair, while she sang in a low and impassioned voice

and struck chords from some strange instrument? Would she not appear as some wild vision of the Lorelei? Or, considering that companions were visible, and some talking and jesting occasionally heard, might not this be a company of strolling play-actors, such as all honest persons were aforesaid con- jured to discountenance and suppress?*

You know that when Zerlina has sung the first verses of her dramatic song, Diavolo, disguised as a marquis, suddenly rises and sings the concluding verse himself. Bell accordingly handed the guitar to Count von Rosen with a pretty smile. But would a young man, on such a night, sing a ballad about a mere bandit? No! The lieutenant was not averse to act the character of Diavolo, so far as his minstrelsy went, but he adopted one of his gentler moods. Lightly running his fingers over the strings, he began to sing of Agnese la Zitella; and how had he learned to soften his voice so? The pretty Agnes was told that she was as sweet as the spring, and then she is made to call forth her lover because the night is so fair—so much fairer than the day—and so silent. 'Tis a pleasant barcarole, and conveys a message as well as another. But lest he should be thought too bold, probably, our Uhlan rose abruptly when he had finished the song, and said lightly, with a laugh, "There! was not that touching enough for Diavolo? He was a very accomplished person, to have all the rough delights of a brigand, and then go about dressed as a marquis and amuse himself with adventures. I think they treated him badly in the end, if I do remember right."

Bell did not answer. She had got back the guitar. Apparently she was looking far down over the moonlit plain, her eyes grown distant and thoughtful,

* "All persons concerned are hereby desired to take notice of and suppress all mountebanks, ropedancers, ballad-singers, etc., that have not a license from the Master of his Majesty's Revels (which for the present year are all printed with black letters, and the king's arms in red); . . . and all those that have licenses with red and black letters are to come to the office to change them for licenses as they are now altered. April 17, 1684."—*The Antiquary*, No. 1.

and as her fingers wandered over the strings, we heard, almost as in a dream, the various careless notes shape themselves into a melody—a wild, sad melody, that seemed to breathe the tenderness and the melancholy of this still night. "Silent, O Moyle, be the sound of thy waters:" perhaps that was the air, or perhaps it was the heart-breaking "Coulin"—one could scarcely say; but when at last we heard no more of it, Tita rose and said we must go indoors. "There was something quite regretful in her tone. It seemed as if she were bidding good-bye to a scene not soon to be met with again.

The lieutenant gave his hand to Bell, and assisted her down the steep bank into the road, and we passed on until the window of the inn was found glimmering red through the moonlight. We cast a passing glance around. Bourton lay beneath us, asleep. The great landscape beyond remained dark and silent under the luminous whiteness of the air. The silence seemed too sacred to be broken.

"Good-night," said Tita to the lieutenant. "I hope you have spent at least one pleasant evening with us on this journey."

"I have spent many, madame," he said earnestly, "and many very pleasant mornings and days, and I hope we shall have a great many more. I do think we four ought to turn vagrants—gypsies, you call them—and go away altogether, and never go back any more to a large town."

"What do you say, Bell?" asked Tita, with a kindly if half-mischievous look.

"I suppose we get to Worcester tomorrow," said Bell, with not much appearance of joy in her face; and then she bade good-night to us all, and departed with my lady.

"There it is!" said the lieutenant, with an impatient flinging down of his cap on the table. "That is what interferes with all our pleasure. You go away on the most delightful excursion in the world—you have the most beautiful scenes and pleasant companions and freedom—everything you can wish; and then the

young lady who ought to be more happy than any one—who is at the time of life to have no care but to enjoy her prettiness and her good temper, and all that—who is the pleasant ornament of the excursion, and is a great delight to all of us,—then she is vexed and frightened because that this—this—this contemptible fellow threatens to meet her in one of those big towns. Sacker-rrrrr-ment! I do hope he will come and have it over; but if he is annoying, if he vexes her any more—"

Thus do we poor mortals fret and vex ourselves in the midst of happiest circumstances. But at last there comes a time for sleep. And soon this solitary inn on the hill was as quiet and peaceful as the great world outside, where the moonlight seemed to have hushed the very winds to rest, and where the far woods and the streams and the low hills along the edge of the land lay still and dark under the cold majesty of the stars.

[*Note by Queen Titania, written at Worcester on the evening of the following day.*]—"Any comment of mine on the foregoing is at the moment unnecessary: we have other matters to engage our attention. *Arthur has come.* I can find no words to express the deep and serious annoyance which this escapade is likely to cause. All our plans may be upset, for he can scarcely explain his present wild proceedings without provoking some sort of final agreement with Bell. And suppose she should consent to be engaged to him, how are we to continue our journey? Of course he will not allow her: if he had not disliked it, he would not be here now. Certainly, I *think* Bell has acted imprudently, for I told her that if she did not answer his letter, he would be sure to imagine all manner of things, and come and see her. The consequence is, that she is, I fear, in a great dilemma, for I do not see how she can avoid either refusing him altogether or consenting to everything that he asks. And as we can't continue our journey till Monday, he will have a whole day to persecute

her into giving him an answer of some kind; and then she is so foolishly good-hearted that if he is only pathetic enough she will say "Yes" to *everything*. It is

most provoking. If we could only get this one day over, and him back to London!
T."



PART IV.

CHAPTER X.

THE AVENGER.

Love had ordained that it was Abra's turn
To mix the sweets and minister the urn.

SURELY nine o'clock was early enough for breakfast at this remote little inn on the top of the hill; and indeed, when we parted the night before, after our moonlight improvisation of *Fra Diavolo*, that was the hour agreed upon. Nine o'clock! Going down at a quarter-past eight, with some notion that the lieutenant might have sat up half the night consuming his wrath in the smoking of many cigars, and might now be still in bed, I heard voices. Sometimes there was a laugh—and no one who had once heard Bell's musical laugh could ever mistake it. When I went into the parlor, which had been the lieutenant's bed-room, I found that all traces of his occupation were gone; a fire was burning brightly in the grate, the breakfast-tray was laid, and Bell sat at the open window talking to Von Rosen himself, who was standing out on the pavement in the full blaze of the morning sunshine that now filled the main thoroughfare of Bourton-on-the-Hill.

Bell looks round with a startled air.

"My dear," I say to her, "traveling is doing you a world of good. Early rising is an excellent thing for young people."

"I did not know when you might want to start," says Bell gently, and rather averting her eyes, for which there was no reason whatever.

At this moment Queen Titania came down looking brisk and cheerful, as she always does in the morning. She glanced at the fire, at the clean table, at Bell sitting by the window and at the blaze of sunlight on the wall on the other side of the street, which threw Von Rosen's figure into bold relief. Apparently this pleasant picture put her into an excellent humor, and she said to the

lieutenant, with one of her brightest looks, "Well, have you been making discoveries this morning? Have you made the acquaintance of many people? Has Bourton-on-the-Hill anything peculiar about it?"

"Oh yes, madame," said the lieutenant gravely, "something very singular, which you will not like to hear. This is an English village, in the middle of the country, and yet they never have any milk here—never. They cannot get any. The farmers prefer to make butter, and they will not sell milk on any inducement."

"Why," said Tita, "that is the reason of our having no milk with our tea last evening. But is there no one the landlady can beg a little milk from?"

The lieutenant looked at Bell, and that young lady endeavored to conceal a smile. They had evidently been speculating on Tita's dismay before we came down.

"The great farmer in the neighborhood," continued the lieutenant gravely, "is a Mrs. Phillips. I think she owns all the cattle, all the milk. I did send to her a polite message an hour ago to ask if she would present us with a little of it; but no: there is no answer. At the moment that mademoiselle came down I was going up to Mrs. Phillips's farm to get the milk for you, but mademoiselle was too proud for that, and would not allow me to go, and said she would not take it now, since the woman had refused it."

"And how did you propose to overcome Mrs. Phillips's obstinacy?" asked Tita, who seemed possessed by a fear that sooner or later the predatory instincts of this Uhlan would get us into trouble.

"Oh, I do not know," said the lieutenant, and with that he held out a small book he had in his hand. "See! I have made more discoveries this morning. Here is a note-book I have found

of a young lady at school, who has been staying, perhaps, at this house; and it has given me much amusement—oh, very much amusement—and instruction also. It is just the same as if I had been in the school with her, and she has told me all about her teachers and the other girls, and all that. Shall I read some to you?"

"Now, *is* it fair," said Bell, "to peep into a young lady's secrets like that?"

"But I have done so already," replied Von Rosen coolly. "I have read it all, and now I will tell you some of it. First, there are addresses of friends—that is nothing. Then there are stitches of knitting—that is nothing, only the young lady seems correct and methodist—no, methodical, I should say. Then there are notes of lectures, and very much good information in them—oh, very good indeed. I am not surprised your English young ladies know very much. Let me see: 'Epic poetry we like, because they treat of great men and great actions. *Paradise Lost* admired for its noble language. Milton a Puritan. England receives solidity of character from the Puritans. Dryden and Byron are not read, although very great. Byron hated his own race—is not a good poet to read.' This is very good instruction, but she hastens now to put down something about two other girls, who were perhaps at the lecture. She says: 'Shocking, impertinent, ill-bred creatures: my spirit recoils from them.' Then there is a question addressed to her neighbor: 'Do you see how Miss Williams has got her hair done?'"

Here Queen Titania protested against these revelations, and would have held out her hand for the book, but the lieutenant only stepped back a few inches from the window and said, seriously, "There is much better information to come. Here she puts down in order the phrases which one of the masters has used to her class—polite phrases, she says, to use to ladies: '1. You degrade yourselves. 2. How much more kitchen-maidism? 3. Simply offensive. 4. It shows how you have been brought up. 5. I will put a stop to this impertinence.

6. Silence, ladies! 7. Pretty conduct! Will your dignity allow you to sit down?' I am afraid he has had an unruly class. But just at the end of this there is a very curious thing. There are three lines all surrounded by a scroll, and do you know what is written?—'A woman can do *anything* with a man by not contradicting him;' and underneath the scroll is written, 'Don't I wish this was true? HELEN M.—.' None of the rest is written so clearly as this."

"Count von Rosen, I will *not* listen to any more!" cried Tita. "It is most unfair of you to have been reading this young lady's confessions."

"I get them in a public inn: I have the right, have I not?" remonstrated the count. "It is not for pleasure, it is for my instruction, that I read. Oh, there are very strange things in this book."

"Pray give it to me," said Bell quite gently.

He had refused to surrender it to Tita, but the moment that Bell asked for it he came forward and handed it in through the window. Then he came in to breakfast.

Little time was spent at breakfast, the sun was shining too brightly outside. We called for our bill, which was brought in. It was entitled "Bill of Fare." Our dinner of the previous evening was called tea, and charged at the rate of one shilling a head. Our breakfasts were one shilling each. Our bed-rooms were one shilling each. Any traveler, therefore, who proposes to stay at Bourton-on-the-Hill, cannot do better than put up at the inn of Widow Seth Dyde, especially as there is no other; and I heartily wish that he may enjoy something of the pleasant companionship, the moonlight and the morning freshness that marked our sojourn on the top of this Worcestershire hill.

Then into the phaeton again, and away we go through the white sunlight and the light morning breeze that is blowing about those lofty woods. There is a resinous odor in the air, coming from the furze and the ferns. The road glares in the sunlight. Overhead the still blue is scarcely flecked by a cloud, but all

the same there is a prevailing coolness that makes the driving through the morning air delicious. It is a lonely country, this stretch of forest and field on the high level between Bourton and Broadway. We pass Bourton Clump, and leave Bourton Wood on the right. We skirt Upton Wold, and get on by Furze Heath. Then, all at once, the land in front of us seems to drop down: we come in sight of an immense stretch of blue plain, from which the thin mists of the morning have not wholly risen. We are on the top of the famous Broadway Hill.

By the side of the road there is a strange, old-fashioned little building, which is apparently a wayside chapel. Count von Rosen jumps down to have a look at this odd relic of our former Catholicism, which has remained on the summit of this hill for several centuries. He can discover nothing but a sign which tells that this sacred edifice now contains wines, spirits and beer; so he comes back and goes up the corner of a field opposite, where a middle-aged man, surrounded by some young folks, is making hay. In the utter stillness of the place we can hear all the questions and answers. The small building is not so very old: it never was a church. The stones there mark the boundary between Gloucester and Worcester. The view from this place is considered unrivaled for extent: you can see the Black Sandy Mountains on a very clear day.

"Indeed!" says the count. "Where are they, the mountains you speak of?"

"I don't know, sir—I've heerd tell on 'em—I never wur theear."

Going down this steep hill, Tita looks anxious. A bad stumble, and we should go rolling over this little wall down into the ravine beneath. One has a far-off reminiscence of Switzerland in watching the horses pulling back at the pole in this fashion, while every bend of the road seems more precipitous than its predecessor. Then we get down to the plain, rattle through the level and straggling village of Broadway, and get into the fields again, where the sun is lying warmer than it was up over the top of the hill.

There is a small boy in a smock-frock sitting underneath the hedge, whittling a stick, while a shepherd's dog lies on the grass beside him.

"Evesham?" calls out the count as we pass, merely because there has been a little doubt about the road.

"Naw, zir," was the answer, uttered with a fine *sang-froid*.

Of course we pull up directly.

"Isn't this the way to Evesham?" I ask.

"Yaas, zir," says the boy, really looking up from his stick, but sitting still.

"This is the way to Evesham?"

"Yaas, zir."

"Do you know where it is?"

"Naw, zir."

"He is a very cautious boy," says the lieutenant, as we drive on—"a very cautious boy indeed."

"If he had been asked properly at first," says Bell with great gravity, "he would have given a proper answer. But when you say 'Evesham?' of course the boy tells you this is not Evesham."

Evesham, when we did get to it, was found a very bright, clean and lively little town, with the river Avon slowly gliding through flat meadows, forming a sort of loop around. In the quaint streets a good amount of business seemed to be going on; and as we put up the phaeton and horses at the Crown, and went off for a brief ramble through the place, we found quite an air of fashion in the costume of the young ladies and the young gentlemen whom we met. But the latter, although they had copied very accurately the prince of Wales's dress of the previous year, and had very stiff collars and prominent canes, had an odd look of robust health in their cheeks, which showed they were not familiar with Piccadilly and the Park; while the former, although they were very pretty and very neatly attired, ought not to have turned and pretended to look into the shop-windows in order to have a look at Bell's pretty gray dress and hat, and at Queen Titania's more severe but no less graceful costume. But Evesham does not often entertain two angels unawares, and some little curiosity

on the part of its inhabitants may be forgiven.

The people of Evesham are not much given to boating on the Avon; and so—postponing our usual river-excursion until we should reach the Severn—Bell besought us to go into a photographer's establishment and make experiments with our appearance. The artist in question lived in a wooden house on wheels, and there were specimens of his handiwork nailed up outside. Our entrance apparently surprised the photographer, who seemed a little nervous, and perhaps was a trifle afraid that we should smile at his efforts in art. But surely nothing could be more kindly than Bell's suggestions to him and her conversation with him; for she, as a professional herself, conducted the negotiations and arranged the groups. The artist, charmed to see that she knew all about his occult processes, and that she was a very courteous and kindly visitor, became almost confidential with her, and began to talk to her of us three as if we were but blocks of wood and of stone to be played with as these two savans chose. Of the result of the various combinations into which we were thus forced little need be said. Queen Titania came out very well, her pale, dark, clear-cut face telling in every picture, and even making you forget the tawdry bit of brass and the purple velvet of the frame. As for the rest of us, a journey is not a good time to have one's portrait taken. The flush of healthy color produced by the wind and by much burning of the sun may look very well on the natural face, but is apt to produce a different effect on glass.

The lieutenant, for example, roared with laughter when he saw himself transfigured into a ferocious bandit, with a great black beard, a dark face, with two white holes where his light-blue eyes should have been. But the moment he had laughed out he caught sight of Bell's face. The young lady looked very much vexed, and her eyes were cast down. Instantly the young man said, loud enough for the artist to hear, "I do seem to myself very ridiculous in this English

costume. When you are used to uniforms for a very long time, and all at once get into this common dress, you think yourself some other person, and you cannot help laughing at the appearance yourself makes."

Bell's eyes said "Thank you" as plainly as eyes could speak, and then she paid a very grave and gentle compliment to the artist, whom we left beaming with pride and gratitude toward the young lady.

"To go flirting with a traveling photographer!" says Queen Tita, as we went in to luncheon: "for shame, Bell!"

"No, it was only mademoiselle's good nature to the poor man," said the lieutenant with an unnecessary tone of earnest protest. "I do think he is the very happiest person in Evesham to-day—that he has not been so happy for many a day."

"I think the portraits are very good," says Bell, looking down, "if you consider how he has to work."

"Now you know you can't excuse yourself, Bell," says my lady. "You paid him compliments that would have turned any man's head; and as for the truth of them—or rather the unblushing perversion of truth in them—"

But at this moment Tita happened to be passing Bell's chair, and she put her hand very gently on the young lady's head and patted her cheek—a little caressing action which said more than a thousand protestations of affection.

Our setting out for Worcester was rather a dismal business. Were we school-children who had been playing truant, that we should regard with apprehension a return to town? Or were Bell's vague fears contagious? In vain the lieutenant sought to cheer her. She knew, and we all of us knew, that if Arthur Ashburton chose to come and ask to see her, nothing would be easier than for him to discover our whereabouts. He was aware of our route, and had been told the names of the principal towns at which we should stop. A party of four come from London in a phaeton is not a customary occurrence, and a brief inquiry at the chief hotels in any town

would be likely to give him all the information he required.

Then, as we afterward discovered, Bell had returned no answer to the letter he had sent to Oxford. She had been too much hurt, and had forborne to reply in kind. Who does not know the distracting doubts and fears that an unanswered letter, when one is at a certain age in life, may conjure up, and the terrible suspense that may prompt to the wildest action? We affected to share in Bell's dismay. The lieutenant seemed light-hearted, and as he relinquished his attempts to break the silence, he sent the horses on at a good pace, and hummed to himself broken snatches of a ballad, and talked caressingly to Castor and Pollux.

When we were a few miles from Evesham it occurred to us that we might as well ask if we were on the proper road. There seemed a curious quietness and picturesqueness about the wooded lanes through which we were driving in the calm of the twilight. At length we reached a turnpike at the corner of several unfrequented paths, and here an old lady was contentedly sewing, while her assistant, a pretty little girl of thirteen, collected the threepenny pieces. Well, we had only come about five miles out of our route. Instead of going by Pershore, we had struck away northward, and were now in a labyrinth of country lanes, by any of which we might make our way along through the still landscape to Worcester. Indeed, we had no cause to regret this error. The out-of-the-way road that runs by Flyford, Flavell and Broughton Hackett proved to be one of the pleasantest we had encountered. In the clear twilight we found ourselves driving through a silent and picturesque district, the only life visible in which was the abundant game. The partridges that were dusting themselves in the road before us did not get up and disappear with a strong, level, low flight toward some distant field, but walked sedately into the grass by the roadside, and then passed through the hedge. We saw several pheasants calmly standing at the outskirts of the woods.

The plump little rabbits ran about like mice around the fences. The sound of the phaeton wheels was the only noise heard in this peaceful solitude, and as we drove on, the dusk grew apace and the movements of bird and beast were no longer visible.

Then a new twilight arose—a faint, clear light shining up from below the horizon, and we knew the moon would speedily be glimmering through the black branches of the woods. The hamlets we passed showed streaks of red fire within their windows. There were glow-worms in the road, points of blue fire in the vague darkness. Then we drove into the gloom of the avenues of Spetchley Park, and finally, with still another glare appearing in the sky—this time a ruddy hue like the reflection of a great fire—we got nearer and nearer to the busy town, and at last found the horses' feet clattering on a stone street.

The thoroughfares of Worcester were busy on this Saturday night, but at length we managed to make our way through the people and vehicles up to the Star Hotel. We drove into the spacious archway, and passed into the hall while the people were bringing in our luggage. The lieutenant was, as usual, busy in giving orders about everything, when the head-waiter came up and begged to know my name. Then he presented a card: "The gentleman is staying at the Crown. Shall I send him a message, sir?"

"No," says Tita, interposing: "I will write a note and ask him to come round to dinner—or supper, whichever it ought to be called."

"Oh, has Arthur come?" says Bell quite calmly.

"So it appears, my dear," says Queen Titania; and as she utters the words she finds that Von Rosen has come up and has heard.

"All right!" he says cheerfully. "It will be a pleasure to have a visitor at dinner, madame, will it not? It is a pity we cannot take him any farther with us when we start on Monday; but I suppose he has come on business to Worcester?"

The lieutenant took the matter very coolly. He bundled Bell and Tita up stairs to look after the disposal of their effects, and then came into the dining-room to see what arrangements had been made about dinner.

"If he behaves himself, that is very well and good. You must treat him civilly. But if not, if he is foolish and disagreeable, why—"

The lieutenant did not say what would happen then. He bethought himself of the horses, and strode away down into the darkness of the yard, humming lightly, "Mädele, ruck, ruck, ruck an meine grüne Seite!" He was evidently in no warlike mood.

CHAPTER XI.

APEMANTUS AT THE FEAST.

Faire Emmeline scant had ridden a mile,
A mile forth of the towne,
When she was aware of her father's men
Come galloping over the downe;

And foremost came the carlish knight,
Sir John of the north countraye;
"Nowe stop, nowe stop, thou false traitoure,
Nor carry that lady awaye!"

"My dear," I say to Queen Titania as she is fastening a rose in her hair before going down to dinner, "pray remember that Arthur Ashburton is 'also a vertebrate animal.' He has done nothing monstrous or inhuman in paying you a visit."

"Paying me a visit!" says Tita impatiently. "If he had come to see me I should not care. But you know that he has come to pick a quarrel with Bell, and that she is likely to grant him everything he asks; and if she does not there will be infinite trouble and vexation. I consider it most provoking, and most thoughtless and inconsiderate on his part, to thrust himself upon us in this way."

"And yet, after all," I say as she fastens on a bracelet which was given her nearly twenty years ago now, "is there anything more natural? A young man is in love with a young woman—"

"It is his own fault," she interposes.

"Perhaps. So much the worse. He

ought all the more to have your compassion, instead of your indignant scorn. Well, she leaves his charming society to go off on a wild rampage through the country. A possible rival accompanies her. The young man is torn asunder with doubts and fears. He writes to her. She does not answer. His anxiety becomes a madness, and forthwith he sets off in pursuit of her. Is there anything in all this to brand him as an outcast from humanity?"

"Why, look at the folly of it! If the girl had proper spirit would it not drive her into refusing him altogether?"

"Foolish, my dear, yes, but not criminal. Now the whole of you seem to look on Arthur as a monster of wickedness because he is anxious to marry the girl he is fond of."

My lady alters the disposition of the thin tracery of silver cord which runs through the brown masses of her hair, and as she thus manages to shelve the subject, she says, "I suppose we shall have a pleasant time at dinner. Arthur will be fiercely amusing. Plenty of sarcasm going about. Deadly looks of hatred. Jokes as heavy as that one Bell talks of—that was carried to the window by four men, and killed a policeman when it tumbled over."

My lady is gently reminded that this story was told of a German before the date of Bell's conversion; whereupon she answers coolly, "Oh, I do not suppose that Count von Rosen is like all Germans. I think he is quite an exception—a very creditable exception. I know I have never met any one the least like him before."

"But heroes were not common in your parish, were they?"

"They were in yours," says Tita, putting her arm within mine and speaking with the most gracious sweetness, "and that was why they took no notice of you."

We go down stairs. At the head of the large dining-room, in front of the fireplace, a young man is standing. He has a time-table in his hand, which he is pretending to read, and his hat is on his head. He hastily removes that most important part of an Englishman's attire

when my lady enters the room, and then he comes forward with a certain apprehension and embarrassed look on his face. If he had been growing nervous about his reception, there was nothing, at all events, to be feared from Queen Titania, who would have welcomed the — himself with an effusive courtesy if only she had regarded it as her duty.

"Oh, Arthur," she says, her whole face lighting up with a gladness which amazed even me, who am accustomed to watch her ways, "I am really delighted to see you! How good of you to come and spend the evening with us on so short a notice! I hope we have not taken you away from any other engagement?"

"No," says the young man, apparently very much touched by this kindness, "and—and—it is I who ought to apologize for breaking in on you like this."

"Then you will spend to-morrow with us also?" says my lady, quite lightly. Indeed, there is nothing like facing the inevitable with a good grace.

"Yes," says Arthur, rather humbly, "if you think I'm not intruding."

"Why, your coming will be quite a relief. I should never have forgiven you if you had been in our neighborhood without coming to see us."

You might think that this little speech was of the nature of a fib. But it was not, just at that moment. When people are absent, Tita is about as cool and accurate and severe in her judgment of them as any woman can be, and she is not disinclined to state her opinion. But once they come near her—and especially if she has to play the part of hostess and entertain them—the nature and exuberant kindness of the woman drive her into the most curious freaks of unconscious hypocrisy. Half an hour before she had been talking of Arthur in a way that would have astonished that young man if he had known, and had been looking forward with dismay and vexation to all the embarrassments of his visit. Now, however, that he was there—thrown on her mercy as it were—she showed him a quite inordinate kindness, and that in the most honest

way in the world. A couple of minutes sufficed to convince Arthur that he had at least one firm friend in our household.

He began to look anxiously toward the door. Presently a voice that he knew pretty well was heard outside, and then—ominous conjunction!—the lieutenant and Bell entered together. Von Rosen had held the door open for his companion, so that Bell advanced first toward our visitor. Her face was quite calm and a trifle reserved, and yet every one could see that as she shook hands with the young man there was a timid, half-concealed look of pleasure and welcome in her eyes. He, on his part, was gloomily ceremonious. He scarcely took any notice of the greeting which the lieutenant carelessly addressed to him. He accompanied us over to the table, and took a seat on the right hand of Tita with a silence that portended evil. We were likely to have a pleasant evening.

Had he possessed a little more worldly prudence or *savoir faire*, he would now have made some light excuse for his being there. He ought, for form's sake, have given us to understand that, as he was obliged to be in Oxford, he had come on by rail to pay us a visit. But, as it was, no explanation was forthcoming. Our Apemantus at the feast had apparently dropped from the skies. He looked very uncomfortable, and replied in monosyllables to the various and continuous remarks that Tita addressed to him. He had never spoken to Bell, who sat next him, and who was herself silent. Indeed, the constraint and embarrassment from which she was suffering began to vex the lieutenant, who strove in vain to conquer it by every means in his power.

The barometer steadily fell. The atmosphere grew more and more gloomy, until a storm of some sort was inevitable. The anxious efforts of Queen Tita to introduce some cheerfulness were touching to see; and as for Bell, she joined in the talk about our journey and what we had seen in a series of disconnected observations that were uttered in a low and timid tone, as if she was afraid to draw down lightning from the thunder-clouds.

Lieutenant von Rosen had at first addressed a word or two to our guest, but finding the labor not productive, he had dropped him entirely out of the conversation. Meanwhile, Arthur had drunk a glass or two of sherry. He was evidently nettled at finding the lieutenant almost monopolizing attention, for Tita herself had given up in despair and was content to listen. Von Rosen was speaking as usual of the differences between English and German ways, and social aims, and what not, until at last he drifted into some mention of the republican phenomena that had recently been manifested in this country.

Now what conceivable connection is there between the irritation of an anxious lover and republicanism? Master Arthur had never alarmed any of us by professing wild opinions on that subject or on any other. We never knew that the young man had any political views, beyond a sort of nebulous faith in the crown and the constitution. Consider, therefore, our amazement when, at this moment, he boldly and somewhat scornfully announced himself a republican, and informed us that the time was come for dismissing old superstitions and destroying the last monopolies of feudalism. There would be a heavy account to settle with the aristocracy that had for generations made laws to secure its own interests, and tied up the land of the country so that an idle population had to drift into the big towns and become paupers. All this was over. New times were at hand. England was ripe for a new revolution, and woe to them that tried to stem the tide!

The explanation of this outburst was merely this—that Arthur was so angry and impatient with the state of things immediately around him that he was possessed with a wild desire to upset and destroy something. And there is nothing so easy to upset and destroy, in rhetoric, as the present political basis of England.

Well, we looked at the lad. His face was still aglow, and there was something of triumph as well as of fierceness in it. The hero of the old Silesian song, when

his sweetheart has forgotten the vows she made and the ring she gave him is broken in two, would like to rush away into battle and sleep by camp-fires under the still night. But nothing half so ordinary would do for this fire-eater, who, because he could not very well kill a Prussian lieutenant, must needs attack the British crown. Was there any one of us four inclined to resent this burst of sham heroics? Was there not in it something of the desperation of wretchedness that was far more entitled to awaken compassion? Had Arthur been less in love he would have been more prudent. Had he controlled his emotions in that admirable fashion with which most of our young gentlemen now-a-days seem to set about the business of choosing a wife, he would not have made himself absurd. There was something almost pitiable in this wild, incoherent, ridiculous effort of a young man to do or say something striking and picturesque before the eyes of a girl whose affections he feared were drifting away from him.

The lieutenant, to whom this outbreak was particularly addressed, took the affair very good-naturedly. He said, with a smile, "Do you know who will be the most disappointed if you should have a republic in England? Why, the republicans that are very anxious for it just now. Perhaps some of them are very respectable men—yes, I believe that—but if I am not wrong the men who make the great fuss about it in your nation are not like that. Agitators—is not that what you do call them? And, if you have England a republic, do you think the government of the country will be given to those noisy persons of the present? No—that is not possible, I think. When the republic comes, if it does come at all—and I do not know how much force is in this demonstration—all your great men, your well-educated men, your men of good position and good breeding and good feeling—they will all come forward, as they do now, to see that the country is properly governed. And what will become of the present republicans, who are angry be

cause they cannot get into Parliament, and who wish for a change that they may become great persons? When you take away the crown, they will not all be kings, I think: there is too much of good sense in this country and of public spirit, that makes your best men give up their own comfort to look after the government; and so it will be then."

"I hope there will be no violent change in our time, at least," said Queen Tita.

"Madame is anxious about the Church, I know," remarked the lieutenant with great gravity, but he looked at Bell, and Bell could not altogether conceal a smile. Arthur, watching them both, noticed that little bit of private understanding, and the gloom on his face visibly deepened.

This must be said, however, that when an embarrassing evening is unavoidable, a dinner is the best method of tiding it over. The various small incidents of the feast supply any ominous gaps in the conversation, and there is, besides, a thawing influence in good meat and drink which the fiercest of tempers finds it hard to withstand. After the ebullition about republicanism, Arthur had quieted somewhat. By the time we had got down to the sweets, and perhaps with the aid of a little champagne—the lad never drank much at any time, I ought to say—his anger had become modified into a morose and sentimental melancholy, and when he did manage to speak to Bell he addressed her in a wistful and pathetic manner, as if she were some one on board a vessel and he saw her gradually going away from him, her friends and her native land. One little revelation, nevertheless, comforted him greatly; and lovers apt to magnify their misfortunes will note that he might have enjoyed this solace long before if only he had exercised the most ordinary frankness. "You got a letter I sent you to Oxford, I suppose?" he said with a studied carelessness.

"Yes," said Bell, with a little conscious color in her face as she bent down her eyes.

"I am glad I had the chance of seeing you to-night," he continued with the same effort at self-possession, "because

I—I fancied you might be unwell or some accident happened, since you did not answer the letter."

Here an awful moment of silence intervened. Everybody trembled for Bell's reply, which might provoke the catastrophe we had been seeking to postpone. "We did not go for letters on reaching Oxford," she said in a low voice. "It was late—I suppose the office was shut—and we were rather tired."

This is felt to be an awkward commencement. A deeper constraint is visible. For if she had been very anxious—this is the reflection that must naturally occur to the young man's mind—would she not have asked whether the office was shut or not? Arthur was silent.

"So it was only the day before yesterday I got your letter," Bell says, apparently feeling the silence uncomfortable, "and—and I meant to have answered it to-night—"

"Oh, you were going to answer it?" he says, with his face suddenly getting bright.

"Yes," she says, looking up with some surprise. "You did not suppose I wouldn't answer it?"

In fact, that was just what he had supposed, considering that she had been grievously offended by the tone of his letter.

"I meant to have let you know how we all were, and how far we had got," says Bell, conveying an intimation that this sort of letter might be sent by anybody to anybody.

Nevertheless, Arthur greatly recovered himself after this assurance. She had not broken off with him, after all. He drank another glass of champagne, and said, with a laugh, that he had meditated surprising us, but that the design had failed, for every one seemed to have expected him.

"And I suppose I must go back on Monday," he remarked ruefully.

This looked so very like a request for an invitation that I was bound to offer him a seat in the phaeton if he did not mind a little discomfort. You should have seen the look of amazement and

indignation which my lady darted across the table at this moment. Fortunately, Arthur did not see it. He said he was very much obliged—he feared he would have to return—if he went with us for a day or two he would inconvenience us sadly, but he would consider it before Monday morning.

After dinner Von Rosen got up and proposed that he and I should go down to the billiard-room—which is in the end of the building abutting on the stable-yard—and smoke a cigar. Surely generosity could go no farther. Arthur looked surprised, and wore quite a pleasant smile on his face when we rose and left.

But perhaps it was merely selfishness that caused our Uhlán to leave the field, for as we two went down the passage and made our way up to the spacious room, he said, "I am rather sorry for mademoiselle. She does not seem to be very glad to meet her old friend—perhaps because he is not in a good temper. That is why I did say we should go and play billiards: there will be a chance of explanation, and to-morrow he will be all right. It is foolish of him to be disagreeable. All this time of dinner I was thinking to myself how well he might make himself agreeable if he only wished—with knowing all the polite phrases with ease, and being able to talk without thinking. For me, that is different, you know. I am bound in by stupid limits, and when I think to say something nice to any one, then I stop because I know nothing of the words—just like at a wall."

He sent the red ball up and down the table in rather a peevish manner: he felt that Arthur had an advantage perhaps.

"But you talk English remarkably well."

"But I have remarked that you English always say that to a foreigner, and will not tell him when he is wrong. I know I am often wrong; and always about your past tenses—your '*was loving*,' and '*did love*,' and '*loved*,' and like that; and I believe I am very wrong with always saying '*do*' and '*did*,' for I studied to give myself free-speaking

English many years ago, and the book I studied with was Pepys' *Diary*, because it is all written in the first person, and by a man of good station. Now I find you do not say '*I did think*,' but '*I thought*,' only it is very hard to remember. And as for pronunciation, I know I am very wrong."

Well, he certainly had marked forms of pronunciation, which I have considered it unnecessary to reproduce in recording his talk. He said "*I hef*" for "*I have*," and "*a goot shawt*" for "*a good shot*." He also made occasional blunders in accent, through adopting the accent of the Latin word from which the English word is derived. But what were such trifles to the main fact that he could make himself understood, and that when he did talk he talked remarkably good sense in sufficiently intelligible English?

"But this is very strange," he said, "how much more clearly mademoiselle speaks than any English lady or any English person I have known yet. It is very remarkable to me how I have great difficulty to follow people who talk like as if they had several tongues rolling in their mouth, and others speak very fast, and others let the ends of the words slide away; but Miss Bell, she is always clear, distinct and very pleasant to hear; and then she never speaks very loud, as most of your people do to a foreigner."

"Perhaps," I say, "there is a reason for Bell's clearness of speech."

"Why?"

"Perhaps she takes pains to be very distinct in talking to you, while she manages not to show it. Perhaps other people can notice that she speaks with a little more deliberation to you than to any one else."

Von Rosen was obviously much struck. "Is that possible?" he said, with his eyes full of wonder. "I have not noticed that she did talk slow to me."

"No, she conceals it admirably, but all the same such is the fact. It is not so much slowness as a sort of careful precision of pronunciation that she af-

fects; and you ought to be very grateful for such consideration."

"Oh, I think it is very good of her, very good indeed, and I would thank her for it—"

"Don't do that, or you will have no more of it. And at present my lady is catching up a trick of talking in the same way."

"It is very kind," said the lieutenant, turning to the table with rather a thoughtful manner. "You would not have expected a young girl like that to be so reflective of other people."

Then he broke the balls, and by fair strength of arm screwed the white into the corner pocket. Nobody was more astonished than himself, except the marker. It was, indeed, the first losing hazard he had ever made, never having played before on a table with pockets. His next stroke was not so successful, and so he consoled himself with lighting a Partaga about eight inches in length.

"At all events," he continued, "your language has not the difference of *Sie* and *du*, which is a great advantage. Oh, it is a very perplexing thing sometimes. Suppose you do know a young lady very well, and you have agreed with her in private you shall always call each other '*du*,' and then before other people you call her '*Sie*.' it is very hard not to call her '*du*' by mistake, and then every one jumps up and stares at you, and all the secret is known. That is a very terrible thing."

"And please what is the interesting ceremony with which you drink *brüderschaft* with a young lady? The same as usual?—a large jug of beer, your arms intertwined—"

"No—no—no!" he cried. "It is all a mystery. You shall not know anything of that. But it is very good, it is a very pleasant thing, to have *brüderschaft* with a young lady, although you drink no beer and have no ceremonies about it."

"And what did Fräulein Fallersleben's mamma say when you called her daughter '*du*' by mistake?"

The large empty room resounded with the lieutenant's laughter. "That is a

good guess—oh! a very good guess—but not just good enough. For it was she who did call me '*du*,' and all the people were surprised, and then some did laugh; but she herself—oh, she was very angry with herself, and with me too, and for some time she called me '*Sie*' even when we were together, until it was like to be a quarrel. But one more quarrel," added the lieutenant with indifference, "was not much matter. It was usually one every day, and then writing of sorrowful letters at the night, and next morning some reconciliation. *Sackerment!* what is the use of talking of all that nonsense?"

And then once more the ball flew about the table, finally lodging in a pocket and scoring three for a miss. Indeed, our Uhlán was not at home with our big English tables, their small balls, pointed cues and perpetual pockets. Even when he got a good chance of a carrom the smallness of the balls caused him to fail entirely. But he had a very excellent cigar. It was something to be away from the embarrassment that had prevailed at dinner. Perhaps, too, he enjoyed a certain sense of austere self-satisfaction in having left to Arthur full possession of the field. On the whole, he enjoyed himself very well, and then, our cigars being finished, we had a final look at the horses, and then returned to the hotel.

"I am afraid," said Von Rosen with some alarm, "we have been negligent of our duties."

Master Arthur had left some half hour before. The ladies had retired. Only one or two of the busiest toppers were left in the bar-parlor: the waiters looked as if they considered their week's work fairly over.

"Tell me," said my Prussian friend as he got his candle, "is that young gentleman coming round here to-morrow?"

"Probably he is."

"Do you not think, then, it would be good to hire a vehicle and go away somewhere for a drive all the day, before he comes?"

"To-morrow is Sunday."

"Well?"

"Do you fancy you would get either Bell or my lady to go driving on Sunday? Don't you propose such a thing if you are wise. There is a cathedral in this town, and the best thing you can do is to study its history and associations early in the morning. You will have plenty of time to think over them to-morrow inside the building itself."

"Oh, I do not object to that," he remarked coolly as he went up stairs, "and I do not care to have too much driving: it is only to prevent mademoiselle being annoyed, as I think she was at dinner this evening—that is all. I suppose we may go for a walk to-morrow after the church-time? And he will come? Very well, he will not harm me, I am sure; but—but it is a pity—that is all."

And with this somewhat mysterious conclusion the lieutenant disappeared toward his own room.

CHAPTER XII.

A TERRIBLE DAY.

When on the gentle Severn's sedgy bank,
In single opposition, hand to hand,
He did confound the best part of an hour
In changing hardiment with great Glendower.

"If we could only get over this one day!" That was the burden of Tita's complaining the next morning. Arthur had been invited to breakfast, and had declined, but he was coming round to go with us to the cathedral. Thereafter, everything to Tita's mind was chaos. She dared hardly think of what the day might bring forth. In vain I pointed out to her that this day was but as another day, and that if any deeds of wrath or vengeance were hidden away in the vague intentions of our young friend from Twickenham, there was no particular safety gained in tiding over a single Sunday.

"At all events," says my lady firmly, "you cannot do anything so imprudent as press him to accompany us farther on our journey."

"Cannot the phaeton hold five?"

"You know it cannot, comfortably.

But that is not the question. For my own part, I don't choose to have a holiday spoilt by provoking a series of painful scenes, which I know will occur. We may manage to humor him to-day, and get him to leave us in an amiable mood, but it would be impossible to do it two days running. And I am not sure even about this one day."

"But what prevents his dropping down on us at any time—say at Shrewsbury, or Chester, or Carlisle—just as he has done here at Worcester?"

"I will."

That was enough. Having some regard for the young man, I hoped he would submit quietly. But lovers are headstrong, and jealousy, when it is thoroughly aroused, leaves no place in the mind for fear.

It was a bright morning. We could see, through the wire screens of the windows, the Worcester folks walking along the pavements, with the sunlight shining on their Sunday finery.

The lieutenant, as we hurriedly despatched breakfast, for we were rather late, gave us his usual report. "A very fine town," he said, addressing himself chiefly to Tita, who was always much interested in his morning rambles, "with old religious buildings, and houses with ivy, and high walls to keep back the river. There is a large race-course, too, by the river, and on the other side a fine suburb, built on a high bank among trees. There are many pleasant walks by the Severn when you get farther down; but I will show you all the place when we go out of the cathedral. This is a great day at the cathedral, they say—a chief sheriff of the county, I think they call him, is living at this hotel, and he is going; and you see those people?—they are loitering about to see him drive away."

Even as he spoke two resplendent creatures in gray and gold, resembling beef-eaters toned down in color, and gilded, advanced to the archway of the hotel with long trumpets in their hand. These they suddenly lifted, and then down the quiet street sounded a loud *fanfare*, which was very much like those

announcements that tell us, in an historical play, that the king approaches. Then a vehicle drove away from the door: the high sheriff had gone to the cathedral, while our breakfast was not even yet finished.

"He does not have the trumpets sounded every time he leaves the hotel?" said the lieutenant, returning from the window. "Then why when he goes to church? Is it exceptional for a high sheriff to go to church, that he calls attention to it with trumpets?"

At this moment Arthur entered the room. He glanced at us all rather nervously. There was less complaisance, too, in his manner than when we last saw him: the soothing influences of dinner had departed. He saluted us all in a somewhat cool way, and then addressed himself exclusively to my lady. For Bell he had scarcely a word.

It is hard to say how Queen Tita managed, as we left the hotel, to attach Bell and herself to Master Arthur, but such was the result of her dexterous manœuvres; and in this fashion we hurriedly walked along to the cathedral. There was a great commotion visible around the splendid building. A considerable crowd had collected to see the high sheriff, and policemen were keeping a lane for those who wished to enter. Seeing that we were late, and that the high sheriff was sure to draw many after him, we scarcely expected to get inside; but that, at least, was vouchsafed us, and presently we found ourselves slipping quietly over the stone flooring. All the seats in the body of the building being occupied, we took up a position by one of the great pillars, and there were confronted by a scene sufficiently impressive to those of us who had been accustomed to the ministrations of a small parish church.

Far away before us rose the tall and graceful lines of the architecture, until, in the distance, they were lost in a haze of sunlight streaming in from the south—a glow of golden mist that struck upon the northern pillars, throwing up a vague reflection that showed us something of the airy region in which the lines of the

great arches met. We could catch a glimpse, too, of the white-dressed choir beyond the sombre mass of the people that filled the nave. And when the hushed, deep tones of the organ-prelude had ceased to sound along the lofty aisles, there rose the distant and plaintive chanting of the boys, then the richer tones of the bass came in, and then again burst forth that clear, sweet, triumphant soprano that seemed to be but a single voice ringing softly and distantly through the great building. I knew what would occur then. Somehow, Tita managed to slip away from us and get into the shadow of the pillar, with her head bent down and her hand clasped in Bell's; and the girl stood so that no one should see her friend's face, for there were tears running fast down it. It is a sad story, that has been already briefly mentioned in these memoranda. Many years ago she lost a young brother to whom she was deeply attached. He used to sing in the choir of the village church. Now, whenever she hears a choir singing that she cannot see, nothing will convince her that she does not hear the voice of her brother in the clear, distant music; and more than once it has happened that the uncontrollable emotions caused by this wild superstition have thoroughly unnerved her. For days after she has been haunted by the sound of that voice, as if it had brought her a message from the other world—as if she had been nearly vouchsafed a vision that had been somehow snatched away from her, leaving behind an unexplained longing and unrest. Partly on that account, and partly by reason of the weariness produced by constant standing, we were not sorry to slip out of the cathedral so soon as the first portion of the service was over; and so we found ourselves once more in the sweet air and the sunlight.

There was an awkward pause. Tita rather fell behind, and endeavored to keep herself out of sight, while the other members of the party seemed uncertain as to how they should attach themselves. Fortunately, our first movement was to go round and inspect the curious remains

of the old cathedral, which are yet visible; and as these were close at hand, we started off in a promiscuous manner, and got round and under King Edgar's Tower without any open rupture.

How still and quiet lay the neighborhood of the great church on this beautiful Sunday morning! It seemed as if all the life of the place were gathered within that noble building, while out here the winds from over the meadows, and the sunlight, and the fleecy clouds overhead, were left to play about the strange old passages, and sunken arches, and massive gateways, and other relics of former centuries. The bright light that lay warm on the fresh grass and on the ivied walls about lit up the flaky red surface of the old tower, and showed us the bruised effigy of King Edgar in sharp outline; while through the gloom of the archway we could see beyond the shimmering green light of a mass of elms, with their leaves moving in the sun. From thence we passed down to the river wall, where the lieutenant read aloud the following legend inscribed near the gate: "On the 18th of November, 1770, the Flood rose to the lower edge of this Brass Plate, being ten inches higher than the Flood which happen'd on December 23, 1672." And then we went through the arch, and found ourselves on the banks of the Severn, with its bridges and boats and locks and fair green meadows, all as bright and as cheerful as sunlight could make them.

Tita and myself, I know, would at this moment have given a good deal to get away from these young folks and their affairs. What business of ours was it that there should be a "third wheel to the cart," as the Germans say? Arthur was sadly out of place, but how could he help it? My lady having fallen rather behind as we started on our leisurely stroll along the river, Bell, the lieutenant and Arthur were forced to precede us. The poor girl was almost silent between them. Von Rosen was pointing out the various objects along the stream, Arthur, in no amiable mood, throwing in an occasional sarcastic comment. Then more silence. Arthur breaks away from them,

and honors us with his company. Sometimes he listens to what my lady says to him, but more often he does not, and only scowls at the two young folks in front of us. He makes irrelevant replies. There is a fierceness in his look. I think at this moment he would have been glad to have played Conrad the Corsair, or avowed his belief in Strauss, or done anything else desperate and wicked.

Why, it was natural to ask, should this gentle little woman by my side be vexed by these evil humors and perversities—her vexation taking the form of a profound compassion, and a desire that she could secure the happiness of all of them? The morning was a miracle of freshness. The banks of the Severn, once you leave Worcester, are singularly beautiful. Before us were islands, set amid tall river weeds and covered with thick growths of bushes. A gray shimmering of willows came in as a line between the bold blue of the stream and the paler blue and white of the sky. Some tall poplars stood sharp and black against the light green of the meadows behind, and far away these level and sunlit meadows stretched over to Malvern Chase and to the thin line of blue hill along the horizon. Then the various boats, a group of richly-colored cattle in the fields, a few boys bathing under the shadow of a great bank of yellow sand,—all went to make up as bright and pretty a river-picture as one could wish for. And here we were almost afraid to speak, lest an incautious word should summon up thunder-clouds and provoke an explosion.

"Have you any idea when you will reach Scotland?" says Arthur, still glaring at the lieutenant and his companion. "No," replies Tita: "we are in no hurry."

"Won't you get tired of it?"

"I don't think so at all. But if we do we can stop."

"You will go through the Lake Country, of course?"

"Yes."

"It is sure to be wet there," said the young man.

"You don't give us much encouragement," says my lady gently.

"Oh," he replies, "if people break away from the ordinary methods of enjoying a holiday, of course they must take their chance. In Scotland you are sure to have bad weather. It always rains there."

Arthur was determined that we should look upon the future stages of our journey with the most agreeable anticipations.

"Then," he says, "suppose your horses break down?"

"They won't," says Tita with a smile. "They know they are going to the land of oats. They will be in excellent spirits all the way."

"Have you read Mr. Collins's *Cruise upon Wheels*?"

"No, I have not," says my lady.

"That, now, is a remarkably clever book."

"So I have heard people say," rejoins my lady. "It is a story of an excursion in France, is it not?"

"Yes, but"—and here Master Arthur casts his eye around the horizon—"I am afraid it will be said that you have borrowed the idea of driving to Scotland from him."

Could anything more cruel have been imagined? After she had planned the excursion with the greatest forethought and care, and invited the lieutenant, and worked hard to put everything straight for our long holiday, to say that she had stolen the notion from a book was excessively humiliating. Queen Titania could not reply, from pure vexation. She would not justify herself—repeat that she had never seen the book—point out how her project of driving from London to Edinburgh was a wholly different matter—as any person outside Hanwell might see—or appeal to our old and familiar drives around the southern counties as the true origin of the scheme. She preserved a cold and warning silence, and Master Arthur, little heeding, went on to say, "I have always found that the worst of driving about with people was that it threw you so completely on the society of certain persons, and you are bound to quarrel with them."

"That has not been *our* experience," says my lady, with that gracious manner of hers which means much.

Of course she would not admit that her playful skirmishes with the person whom, above all others, she ought to respect, could be regarded as real quarrels. But at this point the lieutenant lingered for a moment to ask my lady a question, and as Bell also stopped and turned, Tita says to him, with an air of infinite amusement, "We have not quarreled yet, Count von Rosen?"

"I hope not, madame," says our Uhlán respectfully.

"Because," she continued, with a little laugh, "Arthur thinks we are sure to disagree, merely on account of our being thrown so much into each other's company."

"I think quite the opposite will be the result of our society," says the lieutenant.

"Of course I did not refer particularly to you," said Arthur coldly. "There are some men so happily constituted that it is of no consequence to them how they are regarded by their companions. Of course they are always well satisfied."

"And it is a very good thing to be well satisfied," says the lieutenant, cheerfully enough, "and much better than to be ill satisfied and of much trouble to your friends. I think, sir, when you are as old as I, and have been over the world as much, you will think more of the men who are well satisfied."

"I hope my experience of the world," says Arthur, with a certain determination in his tone, "will not be gained by receiving pay to be sent to invade a foreign country—"

"Oh, Count von Rosen—" says Bell, to call his attention.

"Mademoiselle!" he says, turning instantly toward her, although he had heard every word of Arthur's speech.

"Can you tell me the German name of that tall pink flower close down by the edge of the water?"

And so they walked on once more, and we got farther away from the city—with its mass of slates and spires getting faint in the haze of the sunlight—and into the still greenness of the country,

where the path by the river-side lay through deep meadows.

It was hard, after all. He had come from London to get speech with his sweetheart, and he found her walking through green meadows with somebody else. No mortal man—and least of all a young fellow not confident of his own position, and inclined to be rather nervous and anxious—could suffer this with equanimity; but then it was a question how far it was his own fault.

"Why don't you go and talk to Bell?" says my lady to him in a low voice.

"Oh, I don't care to thrust my society on any-one," he says aloud, with an assumption of indifference. "There are people who do not know the difference between an old friendship and a new acquaintance: I do not seek to interfere with their tastes. But of course there is a meaning in everything. What are those lines of Popc's?—

Oh say, what stranger cause, yet unexplored,
Could make a gentle belle reject a lord?

I should not attempt to cure a woman of her instinctive liking for a title."

Tita placed her hand on his arm. After all, this excited young man was an old friend of hers, and it seemed a pity to see him thus determined to ruin his own cause. But the light talking we heard in front seemed to say that the "gentle belle" had not overheard that pretty speech and its interesting quotation.

At length, coming to a sudden bend in the river, the lieutenant and his companion proposed that we should rest for a while; and accordingly we chose out comfortable seats on the steep green bank, covered by bushes and trees, which here slopes down to the stream. The picture that lay before and around us was sufficient to have calmed the various moods and passions of these young folks if they had but had eyes for anything but their own affairs. Bell was the only one who paid attention to the world of bright colors that lay around: the lieutenant, imperturbable, easy in manner and very attentive to her, was nevertheless obviously on the watch, and certain to resent any remark that

might by chance miss him and glance by toward her. Certainly, these were not comfortable conditions for a pleasant walk: Tita afterward declared that she was calculating with satisfaction that she had already got through several hours of that terrible day.

The sun was shining far away on the blue Malvern Hills. From the level meadows the lines of pollard willows were gray and silvery in the breezy light. Close at hand the rich masses of green were broken by the red sandstone bank opposite, while the tall trees above sent straggling duplicates of themselves—colored in deep chocolate-brown—down into the lazy stream that flowed beneath us. And there, as we sat and listened for the first ominous observation of one or another of these young folks, lo! there came into the clear white and blue channel of the river a gayly-bedizened barge, that gleamed and glittered in the sunlight and sent quivering lines of color down into the water. The horse came slowly along the road. The long rope rustled over the brushwood on the bank, and splashed on the surface of the stream. The orange and scarlet bands of the barge glided away up and through that world of soft greenness that lay under the shadow of the opposite bank, and then the horse and rope and driver turned the corner of a field, and we saw them no more.

The appearance of the barge had provoked attention and secured silence. When it was gone the lieutenant turned carelessly to Arthur and said, "Do you go back to London to-morrow?"

"I don't know," said the young man gloomily.

"It is such a pity you can't come with us, Arthur!" says Bell very gently, as if begging for a civil reply.

"I have no doubt you will enjoy yourselves very well," he replies, with a certain coldness in his tone.

"We have hitherto," she says, looking down; "the weather has been so good—and—and the scenery was so pleasant—and—and—"

It was Arthur himself, singularly enough, who came to the rescue, little

knowing that he was affording her such relief.

"I don't think you have chosen the right road," he remarked. "The real reminiscences of the old stage-coach days you will find on the York and Berwick road to Scotland. I never heard of any one going to Scotland this way."

"Why," says one of the party, with a laugh that seemed to startle the silence around, "that is the very reason we chose it."

"I have been thinking for some time," he says coldly, "of getting a dog-cart and driving up the old route to Scotland."

The heavens did not fall on him. Queen Tita looked at the tips of her gloves and said nothing; but Bell, having less of skepticism about her, immediately cried out, "Oh, Arthur, don't do that: it will be dreadfully wretched for you going away on such an excursion by yourself."

But the young man saw that his proposal—I will swear it had never entered his brain before that very hour—had produced an effect, and treated it as a definite resolve.

"At least, if you are going, you might as well come with us, or meet us farther on, where the road joins," says Bell.

"No, I am not so mad as to go your way," he replied with an air of disdain. "I shall keep out of the rainy districts, and I mean to go where one can find traces of the old times still hanging about."

"And pray," I venture to ask him, "are all the old inns confined to one part of this unfortunate country? And were there no ways of getting to Scotland but by York and Berwick? I commend to you a study of Cary, my dear boy, before you start for the North, and then you will find a whole display of routes along which stage-coaches used to run. And if you should be tired of driving alone, you can do no better than strike across country from York by the old coach-road that comes on to Penrith, and so go up with us through Carlisle and Moffat on to Edinburgh."

"I am not so sure that I shall go alone," he said quite fiercely.

What did the boy mean? Was he going to drive a white elephant about the country?

"Do you know much of the management of horses?" says the lieutenant, meaning no harm whatever.

"Arthur is in the volunteer artillery—the field artillery do they call it, eh?—and of course he has to manage horses," explains my lady.

"Oh, you are a volunteer?" said the lieutenant with quite an accession of interest. "That is a very good thing. I think all the young men of this country would do much good to their health and their knowledge by being volunteers and serving a time of military service."

"But we don't like compulsion here," says Arthur bluntly.

"That," retorts the lieutenant with a laugh, "is why you are a very ill-educated country."

"At all events, we are educated well enough to have thrown aside the old superstitions of feudalism and divine right; and we are too well educated to suffer a despotic government and a privileged aristocracy to have it all their own way."

"Oh, you do talk of Prussia," says the count. "Well, we are not perfect in Prussia. We have many things to learn and to do, that we might have done if we had been preserved round about by the sea, like you. But I think we have done very well, for all that; and if we have a despotic government—which I do not think—it is perhaps because what is good for England is not always good for every other country; and if we have an aristocracy, they work for the country just like the sons of the peasants, when they go into the army and get small pay, instead of going abroad, like your aristocracy, and gambling away their fortunes to the Jews and the horse-dealers, and getting into debt, and making very much fools of themselves."

"When we of this country," says Arthur proudly, "see the necessity of military preparations, we join the ranks of a body that accepts no pay, but is none the less qualified to fight when that is wanted."

"Oh, I do say nothing against your volunteers. No, on the contrary, I think it is an excellent thing for the young men. And it would be better if the service was continuous for one, two, three years; and they go away into barrack life, and have much drill and exercise in the open air, and make the young men of the cities hardy and strong. That would be a very good army then, I think; for when the men are intelligent and educated, they have less chance of panic—which is the worst that can happen in a battle—and they will not skulk away or lose their courage, because they have so much self-respect. But I do not know whether this is safer—to have the more ignorant men of the peasantry and country-people who will take their drill like machines and go through it all, and continue firing in great danger because they are like machines. Now, if you had your towns fighting against the country, and if you had your town volunteers and your country regiments, with the same amount of instruction I think the country troops would win, although each man might not have as much patriotism and education and self-respect as in the town soldiers. Because the country troops would march long distances, and would not be hurt much by rain or the sleeping out at night, and they would go through their duties like machines when the fight commenced. But your city volunteers—they have not yet got anything like the training of your regular troops that come from the country villages and towns."

"I know this," says Arthur—"that when people talk of an invasion of this country by Prussia, a regiment of our city volunteers would not be afraid to meet a regiment of your professional soldiers, however countrified and mechanical they may be."

"Ah, but that is a great mistake you make," says the lieutenant taking no notice of the challenge. "Our soldiers are not of any single class: they are from all classes, from all towns and villages and cities alike—much more like your volunteers than your regular soldiers, only that they have much more

drill and experience than your volunteers. And what do you say of an invasion? I have heard some people talk of that nonsense, but only in England. Is it that you are afraid of invasion that you imagine these foolish things, and talk so much of it?"

"No, we are not afraid of it," says Arthur, evidently casting about for some biting epigram.

"Yet no one in all Europe speaks or thinks of such a thing but a few of your people here, who give great amusement to us at home."

"There would be amusement of another sort going," says Arthur, getting a little red.

And just at this instant, before he has time to finish the sentence, Tita utters a little scream. A stone has splashed into the stream beneath us. The author of the menace is unknown—being probably one of a gang of young rascals hidden behind the bushes on the other side of the river—but it is certainly not anger that dwells in my lady's bosom with regard to that concealed enemy. He has afforded her relief at a most critical moment, and now she prevents Arthur returning to the subject by proposing that we should walk back to Worcester, her suggestion being fully understood to be a command.

We set out. The lieutenant willfully separates himself from Bell. He joins us elderly folks on the pretence of being much interested in this question of volunteer service, and Bell and Arthur are perforce thrown together. They walk on in front of us in rather an embarrassed way. Bell's looks are cast down: Arthur speaks in a loud voice, to let us know that he is only talking about the most commonplace affairs. But at the first stile we go through they manage to fall behind, and when, at intervals, we turn to see how the river and the meadows and the groves of trees look in the sunshine, we find the distance between us and the young couple gradually increasing, until they are but two almost undistinguishable figures pacing along the bank of the broad stream.

"Well, we have got so far over the

day," said my lady, with a sigh. "But I suppose we must ask him to dine with us."

"Is it necessary, madame?" says the lieutenant. "But perhaps you might ask him to bring better manners with him."

"I am afraid he has been very rude to you," said Tita, with some show of compunction.

"To me? No. That is not of any consequence whatever, but I did think that all this pleasant walk has been spoiled to mademoiselle and yourself by—by what shall I say?—not rudeness, but a fear of rudeness. And yet, what reason is there for it?"

"I don't know," was the reply, uttered in rather a low voice. "But I hope Bell is not being annoyed by him now."

You see that was the way in which they had got to regard this unfortunate youth—as a sort of necessary evil, which was to be accepted with such equanimity as Heaven had granted to the various sufferers. It never occurred to them to look at the matter from Arthur's point of view, or to reflect that there was probably no more wretched creature in the whole of England than he was during this memorable Sunday.

Consider how he spent the day. It was the one day on which he would have the chance of seeing Bell for an unknown period. He comes round in the morning to find her sitting at breakfast with his rival. He accompanies them on a walk into the country, finds himself what the Germans call "the third wheel to the cart," and falls behind to enjoy the spectacle of seeing her walk by the side of this other man, talking to him and sharing with him the beautiful sights and sounds around. Ye who have been transfixed by the red-hot skewers of jealousy, consider the torture which this wretched young man suffered on this quiet Sunday morning. Then he walks home with her: he finds her, as we afterward learn, annoyed about certain remarks of his. He explains in a somewhat saucy manner, and makes matters worse. Then he takes to reproaches, and bids her reflect on what people will say; and here again he goes from one blun-

der to another in talking in such a fashion to a proud and high-spirited girl, who cannot suffer herself to be suspected. In his blindness of anger and jealousy he endeavors to asperse the character of the lieutenant. He is like other officers—every one knows what the Prussian officers, in general, are. What is the meaning of this thing, and the dark suspicion suggested by that? To all of these representations Bell replies with some little natural warmth. He is driven wild by her defence of his rival. He declares that he knows something about the lieutenant's reputation; and then she, probably with a little paleness in her face, stands still and asks him calmly to say what it is. He will not. He is not going to carry tales. Only, when an English lady has so little care of what people may say as to accept this foreign adventurer as her companion during a long journey—

That was all that Bell subsequently told Tita. The boy was obviously mad and reckless, but none the less he had wrought such mischief as he little dreamed of in uttering these wild complaints and suspicions. When we got back to the hotel, he and Bell had overtaken us, and they had the appearance of not being on the best of terms. In fact, they had maintained silence for the last quarter of an hour of the walk.

My lady asked Arthur to dine with us at seven, so that during the interval he was practically dismissed. Seven came, and Arthur appeared. He was in evening dress, conveying a rebuke to uncouth people like ourselves, who were in our ordinary traveling costume. But Bell's seat was vacant. After we had waited a few minutes, Queen Tita went to inquire for her, and in a few minutes returned: "Bell is very sorry, but she has a headache, and would rather not come down to dinner."

Arthur looked up with an alarmed face, the lieutenant scowled, and Tita, taking her seat, said she was afraid we had walked too far in the morning. Strange! If you had seen our Bell walking lightly up to the top of Box-hill and running down again, just by way of amusement

before lunch, you would not have expected that a short walk of a mile or two along a level river-course would have had such an effect. But so it was, and we had dinner before us.

It was not an enlivening meal, and the less said about it the better. Arthur talked much of his driving to Scotland in a dog-cart, and magnified the advantages of the York route over that we were now following. It is quite certain that he had never thought of such a thing before that morning, but the attention that had been drawn to it, and the manner in which he had been led on to boast of it, promised actually to commit him to this piece of folly. The mere suggestion of it had occurred at the impulse of a momentary vexation, but the more he talked of it, the more he pledged himself to carry out his preposterous scheme. Tita heard and wondered, scarcely believing, but I could see plainly that the young man was determined to fulfill his promise if only by way of triumphant bravado, to show his independence of us, and perhaps inspire Bell with envy and regret.

When he left that night nothing was said about his coming to see us away on the following morning. Tita had shown her usual consideration in not referring at all to our drive of the next day, which she understood was to be through the most charming scenery. And when, that same night, she expressed a vague desire that we might slip away on the next morning before Arthur had come, it was with no thought of carrying such a plan into execution. Perhaps she thought with some pity of the young man, who, after seeing us drive away again into the country and the sweet air, and the sunlight, would return disconsolately to his dingy rooms in the Temple, there to think of his absent sweetheart, or else to meditate that wild journey along a parallel line which was to show her that he, too, had his enjoyments.

[NOTE.—I find that the remarks which Queen Titania appended to the foregoing pages when they were written have since been torn off; and I can guess the

reason. A few days ago I received a letter, sent under cover to the publishers, which bore the address of that portion of the country familiarly called "The Dukeries." It was written in a feminine hand, and signed with a family name which has some historical pretensions. Now these were the observations which this silly person in high places had to communicate:

"SIR: I hope you will forgive my intruding myself upon you in this way, but I am anxious to know whether you really do think living with such a woman as your wife is represented to be, is really a matter for *railery* and *amusement*. My object in writing to you is to say that if you can treat lightly the fact of a wife being waspish at every turn, cuffing her boys' ears and talking of whipping, it would have been better not to have made your *extraordinary* complaisance public; for what is to prevent the most ill-tempered woman pointing to these pages and saying that that is how a *reasonable* husband would deal with her? If it is your misfortune to have an ill-tempered wife, you ought not to try to persuade people that you are rather proud of it. Pray forgive my writing thus frankly to you; and I am, sir, your obedient servant, ———."

By a great mischance I left this letter lying open on the breakfast-table, and Tita, coming in, and being attracted by the crest in gold and colors on the paper, took it up. With some dismay I watched her read it. She laid it down, stood irresolute for a moment, with her lips getting rather tremulous: then she suddenly fled into the haven she had often sought before, and looking up with the clear brown eyes showing themselves frightened and pained, like those of some dumb creature struck to the heart, she said, "Is it true? Am I really ill-tempered? Do I really vex you very much?" You may be sure that elderly lady up in Nottinghamshire had an evil quarter of an hour of it when we proceeded to discuss the question, and when Queen Tita had been pacified and reassured. "But we ought to have known,"

she said. "Count von Rosen warned us that stupid persons would make the mistake. And to say that I cuffed my boys' ears! Why you know that even in the magazine it says that I cuffed the boys and kissed them at the same time—of course, in fun—and I threatened to whip the whole house—of course, in fun, you know, when everybody was in good spirits about going away; and now that wicked old woman would make me out an unnatural mother and a bad wife, and I don't know what! I—I—I will

get Bell to draw a portrait of her and put it in an exhibition: that would serve her right." And forthwith she sat down and wrote to the two boys at Twickenham, promising them I know not what luxuries and extravagances when they came home for the Easter holidays. But she is offended with the public, all through the old lady in Notts, and will have no more communication with it, at least for the present.]



PART V.

CHAPTER XIII.

Unto the great Twin Brethren
We keep this solemn feast.
Swift, swift the great Twin Brethren
Came spurring from the east!

CASTOR and Pollux did us notable service that morning at Worcester. Arthur was coming round to see Bell before we started. Queen Tita was oppressed by anxious fears, and declared that now the crisis had come, and that the young man from Twickenham would demand some pledge from Bell as he bade her good-bye. The dread of this danger drove the kindly little woman into such exaggerations of his misconduct of yesterday that I began to wonder if this Arthur was the same lad she used to pet and think so much of when he came down to Leatherhead and dawdled with my lady and Bell along the Surrey lanes of an evening. What had changed him since then?

"You are pleased to be profound," says Tita abruptly.

Well, I was only pointing out to her that one of the chief accomplishments of life is consideration for the sick, and that whereas nearly all women seem to have an instinct that way, men only acquire the habit as the result of experience and reflection. Indeed, with most women the certain passport to their interest and kindness is to be unwell and exact a great deal of patient service from them. Now—I was saying to Tita when she uttered that unnecessary rebuke—why don't women show the same consideration to those who are mentally ailing—to the unfortunate persons whose vexed and irritated brain renders them peevish and ill-tempered? Once get a patient down with fever, and all his fractious complainings are soothed and all his querulous whims are humored. But when the same man is rendered a little insane by meeting with a disappointment, or if he is unable to stand being

crossed in argument, so that the mildest statement about some such contested subject as the American war, Governor Eyre or the annexation of Alsace sends a flash of flame through his head, why should not the like allowance be made for his infirmities? Why should the man who is ill-tempered because of a fever be humored, caressed and coaxed, and the man who is ill-tempered because his reason is liable to attacks of passion be regarded as an ill-conditioned boor, not fit for the society of well-bred ladies and gentlemen?

"I think," says Tita with a little warmth, "you do nothing now but try to invent excuses for Arthur. And it is not fair. I am very sorry for him if he is so vexed that he loses his temper, but that does not excuse his being absolutely rude."

"But his rudeness is part of his ailment," I venture to say. "Ordinarily, he is the mildest and gentlest of young men, who would shrink from a charge of rudeness as the worst thing you could urge against him. At present he is off his head. He does not know what he says, or, rather, he is incapable of controlling his utterances. He is really sick with a fever, though it isn't one of those, apparently, that secure the commiseration of even the most angelic of women."

I regarded that last expression as effective, but no. My lady remarked that she was not accustomed to the treatment of the insane, and that another day such as that she had just passed would soon make her as ill as himself.

Our bonny Bell did not seem so disturbed as might have been expected. When we went down to the coffee-room we found the lieutenant and her sitting at opposite sides of a small table deeply engaged over a sheet of paper. On our entrance the document was hastily folded up and smuggled away.

"It is a secret," said the lieutenant

anticipating inquiry. "You shall not know until we are away on our journey again. It is a packet to be opened in a quiet place—no houses near, no persons to listen; and then—and then—"

"Perhaps it will remain a secret? *Bien!* Life is not long enough to let one meddle with secrets, they take up so much time in explanation; and then they never contain anything."

"But this is a very wonderful thing," said the lieutenant, "and you must hurry to get away from Worcester that you shall hear of it."

We were, however, to have another sealed packet that morning. Master Arthur, knowing full well that he would have but little chance of speaking privately with Bell, had entrusted his thoughts to a piece of paper and an envelope, and just as we were in the breath of departure the young man appeared. The truth was, the lieutenant had ordered the horses to be put in some quarter of an hour before the time we had said we should start; and my lady showed so much anxiety to set forth at once that I saw she hoped to leave before Arthur came.

The phaeton stood in the archway of the hotel, and on the stone steps were flung the rugs and guide-books.

"My dear," says Tita, rather anxiously, to Bell, "do get in! The horses seem rather fresh, and—and—"

"Won't you wait to bid good-bye to Arthur?" says Bell.

"It is impossible to say when he will come: he will understand—I will leave a message for him," says Queen Titania, all in a breath; and with that the lieutenant assists Bell to get up in front.

I have the reins in my hand, awaiting orders. The last rugs are thrown up, books stowed away, everything in readiness: Tita takes her seat behind, and the lieutenant is on the point of getting up.

At this moment Arthur comes round the corner, is amazed for a moment to see us ready to start, and then suddenly brings out a letter. "Bell," he said, "I—I have—there is something here I want you to see—only a moment, and

you can give me an answer now—yes or no—"

The unfortunate young man was obviously greatly excited, his face quite pale, and his speech rapid and broken. He handed up the letter: the crisis that Tita had endeavored to avoid had come. But in this our darkest hour—as I have already hinted—Castor and Pollux came to the rescue. It was the battle of the Lake Regillus acted once again in the gateway of the Worcester Star Hotel. For Pollux, casting his head about and longing to start, managed to fix his bit on the end of the pole, and of course a wild scene ensued. Despite the efforts of the ostler, that horse threw himself back on his haunches; the phaeton described a curve and was driven against the wall with a loud crash; the people about ran back, and the lieutenant jumped out and sprang to the horses' heads. Pollux was still making violent efforts to extricate himself, and Castor, having become excited, was plunging about; so that for a moment it seemed as though the vehicle would be shattered in pieces against the wall of the court. The women were quite still, except that Tita uttered a little suppressed cry as she saw the lieutenant having his feet kicked away from him. But he recovered himself, stuck to the animals' heads, and with the assistance of the ostler at last managed to get the bit off. Then both horses sprung forward. It would have been impossible to have confined them longer in this narrow place. The lieutenant leaped in behind, and the next moment the phaeton was out in the main street of Worcester, both horses plunging and pulling so as to turn all eyes toward us. Certainly it was a good thing the thoroughfare was pretty clear. The great Twin Brethren, not knowing what diabolical occurrence had marked their setting out, were speeding away from the place with might and main; and with scarcely a look at Worcester we found ourselves out in the country again, amid quiet and wooded lanes, with all the sweet influences of a bright summer morning around us.

"I hope you are not hurt," said my

lady to the lieutenant, who was looking about to see whether the smash had taken some of our paint off or done other damage.

"Oh, not in the least, madame," he said, "but I find that one of my boots it is cut, so that I think the shoe of the horse must have done it. And has he caught on the pole before?"

"Only once," she says.

"Then I would have the bit made with bars across, so that it will be more difficult; for suppose this did happen in the road, and there was a ditch and he backed you—"

"I suppose we should go over," remarked Queen Titania philosophically. "But it is strange how often accidents in driving might occur, and how seldom they do occur. But we must really have the bit altered."

"Well," I say privately to my companion, "what message did you leave with Arthur?"

"I could not leave any," she said, "for of course when the horses went back he had to get out of their way. But he will understand that I will write to him."

"Have you read the letter?"

"No."

"Do, like a good girl, and have it over. That is always the best way. You must not go into this beautiful country that lies ahead with a sort of cloud around you."

So Bell took out the letter and furtively opened it. She read it carefully over without uttering a word: then she continued looking at it for a long time.

"I am very glad that accident occurred," she remarks in a low voice. "He said I was to answer 'yes' or 'no.' I could not do that to such a letter as this; and if I had refused he would have been very much hurt. I will write to him from whatever place we stop at to-night."

This resolution seemed greatly to comfort her. If any explanation were needed, it was postponed until the evening, and in the mean time we had fine weather, fresh air and all the bright colors of an English landscape around us. Bell rapidly resumed her ordinary good spirits. She begged to have the reins, and

when these had been handed over to her with various cautions, the excitement of driving a pair of horses that yet showed considerable signs of freshness brought a new color into her cheeks. The route which we now followed was one of the prettiest we had yet encountered. Instead of following the old stage-coach route by Droitwich, we struck almost due north by a line of small and picturesque villages lying buried in the heart of this deeply-wooded country. The first of these was Ombersley—a curious little clump of cottages, nearly all of which were white, with black bars of woodwork crossed and recrossed; and they had odd gables and lattices and decorations, so that they looked almost like toy cottages. Wearing white and black in this prominent way, our Uhlan immediately claimed them as Prussian property, but beyond the fact of their showing the Prussian colors there was little else foreign-looking about those old-fashioned English houses lying along this level lane, and half hidden amid elms. As we got up into the higher ground above Ombersley we found around us a very pretty landscape; and it seemed to strike my gentle companion that the names of the villages around had been chosen to accord with the tender and sylvan beauties of this pretty piece of country. One of the sign-posts we passed had inscribed on it, "To Doverdale and Hampton Lovett." Then in the neighborhood are Elmley Lovett, Elmbridge, Crossway Green and Gardeners' Grove; while down between these runs Doverdale Brook, skirting Westmoor Park, the large house of which we could see as a faint blue mound amid the general leafage. The country, which is flat about Ombersley, gets more undulating about Hartlebury and on toward Kidderminster. The road winds up and down gentle hills, with tall and ruddy banks of sand on each side, which are hanging with every variety of wild flower and wayside weed. On both hands dense woods come down to these tall and picturesque banks, and you drive through an atmosphere laden with mist and resinous scents.

It was fortunate for us, indeed, that before starting we had lived for a time in town, for all the various perfumes of the hedges and fields came upon us with a surprise. Every now and again on these pleasant mornings we would drive past a hay-field, with the warm and sweet odors blowing all around. Or perhaps it was a great bank of wild-rose bushes that filled the air with scent. Then the lime trees were in flower; and who does not know the delight of passing under the boughs laden with blossom when the bees are busy overhead? More rarely, but still frequently enough in this favored country, a whiff of honeysuckle was borne to us as we passed. And if these things sweetened the winds that blew about us, consider what stars of color refreshed the eye as we drove gently past the tall hedge-rows and borders of woods—the golden rock-roses, purple patches of wild thyme, the white glimmering of stitchwort and campion, the yellow spires of the snapdragon, and a thousand others. And then when we ceased to speak there was no blank of silence. Away over the hay-field the lark floated in the blue, making the air quiver with his singing; the robin, perched on a fence, looked at us saucily, and piped a few notes by way of remark; the blackbird was heard, flute-throated, down in the hollow recesses of a wood; and the thrush, in a holly tree by the wayside, sang out his sweet, clear song, that seemed to rise in strength as the breeze awoke a sudden rustling through the long woods of birch and oak.

"Well, touching that sealed packet?" says my lady aloud.

"Oh no, madame," replied the lieutenant, "this is not the time for it. If I must tell you the truth, it is only a drinking-song I have been trying to remember of a young Englishman who was at Bonn with me; and mademoiselle was so good this morning as to alter some of the words. But now?—a drinking-song in this fine, quiet country? No. After we have got to Kidderminster, and when we drive away after lunch, then mademoiselle will play for you the air I did show to her, and I will sing you the

song. All what is needed is that you drink some Rhine wine at Kidderminster to make you like the song."

"Kidderminster Rhine wine!" exclaims one of the party, with a groan. He knows that whatever is suggested now by the lieutenant finds favor with a clear majority of the party.

"That was a very good young fellow," continues the lieutenant as we drive over a high slope and come in view of a mass of manufactories. "Very big and strong he was: we did call him *der grosse Engländer* always; and one time, in the winter, when there was much snow, we had a supper-party at his room. We had many duels then, for we were only boys, but the Englishman was not supposed to be challenged, for he knew nothing of our swords, but he was always ready to fight with his fists, for all that. And this evening I am afraid we did drink too much beer, and young Schweitzer of Magdeburg—he died at Königgrätz, the unfortunate! in '66—he was very angry with the Engländer for laughing at his sweetheart, who was but a young lady in a school there. And he challenged the Englishman, and went up to him and said he would not go away until there was a fight; and do you know what your countryman did? He lifted Schweitzer up in his arms like a baby, and carried him down the stairs, and opened the door and put him in the snow outside, very gently. There was so much laughing over that that we all said it was very good; and Schweitzer was grown sober by the cool of the snow, and he laughed too, and I think they swore *brüderschaft* about it afterward. Oh, he was a very clever fellow, your countryman, and had more delight in our songs than any German I ever knew. But you know how that is?"

Madame said it was no wonder any one should be in love with the German songs, but the lieutenant shook his head: "That is not it at all: no. This is it—that when you know only a little of a language you do not know what is commonplace in it. The simple phrase which is commonplace to others is full of meaning to you. So I find it with

your English. You would laugh if I told you that I find much meaning in poetry that you think only good for children, and in old-fashioned writing which looks affected now. Because, madame, is it not true that all commonplace phrases meant some new thing at one time? It is only my ignorance that I do not know they have grown old and worth little. Now the evening at Twickenham I did hear you go over the names of old-fashioned English songs, and much fun was made of the poetry. But to me that was very good—a great deal of it—because nothing in English is to me commonplace as yet."

"How fortunate you must be!" says one of the party with a sigh.

"You laugh when you say, 'Flow on, thou shining river!' Why? The river flows: it shines. I see a picture out of the words, like the man who wrote them: I am not accustomed to them so as to think them stupid. Then I saw you laugh when some one said, 'I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls.' I did read that song, and although it is stupid that the man thinks he will live in marble halls, I found much tenderness in it. So with this young Englishman. He knew nothing of what was commonplace in our language. If you gave him children's rhymes, he looked at the meaning, and judged it all by that. And when we showed him stiff, artificial verses of old times, he seemed to go back to the time when they were written, and believe much in them and like them. That is a very good thing in ignorance, I think—when you know not much of a language, and every word has much meaning in it, and there is no commonplace anywhere."

This lecture of the lieutenant took us into Kidderminster. What married man is not familiar with this name, held up to him as an awful threat in reply to his grumblings about the price of Turkey and Brussels carpets? As we drove in to the busy town, signs of the prevailing manufacture were everywhere apparent in the large red-brick factories. We put up at the "Lion," and while Von Rosen went off to buy himself a new pair of

boots, we went for a stroll up to the interesting old church, the fine brasses and marble monuments of which have drawn many a stranger to the spot. Then we climbed up to the top of the tower, and from the roof thereof had a spacious view over the level and wooded country, which was deeply streaked by bands of purple where the clouds threw their shadows. Far below us lay the red, busy, smoky town set amid green fields, while the small river ran through it like a black snake, for the bed had been drained, and in the dark mud a multitude of boys could be seen wading, scooping about for eels. When we descended, Von Rosen had got his boots, and was prowling about the churchyard reading the curious inscriptions there. One of them informed the world of the person laid beneath that, "added to the character of a Gentleman, his actions were coeval with his Integrity, Hospitality and Benevolence." But our amiable guide, who had pointed out to us all the wonderful features of Kidderminster and its neighborhood, evidently looked on one particular gravestone as the chief curiosity of the place; for this, he informed us, was placed over a man who had prepared the vault and the inscription ten years before his death. Here is the legend:

To the Memory of
JOHN ORTON,
A MAN FROM LEICESTERSHIRE,
And when he is dead he must lie under
HERE.

The man from Leicestershire was not "alone among mortals" in anticipating his end in this fashion; but no matter. A man may well be allowed to humor himself in the way of a tombstone: it is the last favor he can ask from the world.

"Now," said the lieutenant as we drove away from this manufacturing town into the sweet country again, "shall I sing you the song which the young Englishman used to sing for us? or shall we wait until evening?"

"Now, by all means," said Bell: "and if you will be so good as to get me

out the guitar, I will try to play you an accompaniment."

"A guitar accompaniment to a drinking-song!" says Titania.

"Oh, but this is not a drinking-song, exactly, madame: it is a very moral song, and we shall discuss each verse as it goes along, and you will make alterations of it."

So he got out the guitar. We were now far away from any houses—all around us great woods that lay dark and green under a clouded afternoon sky. The road was very hilly, and sometimes, from the summit of a great height, we caught a glimpse of a long western stretch of country lying blue and misty under the gray sky. Behind us Kidderminster looked like a dusky red splotch in a plain of green, and all around it the meadows and fields were dark and intense in color. But then in the west we could see an occasional glimpse of yellow in the pall of cloud, and we hoped the sunset would break through the veil.

"Ladies and gentlemen," said the lieutenant, "the song I am about to sing to you—"

Here Bell began to play a light prelude, and without further introduction our Uhlan startled the silence of the woods and fields by singing, in a profound and melancholy voice, the first two verses of the ballad composed by the young Englishman at Bonn, which ran somewhat as follows:

Burgundy isn't a good thing to drink :
 Young man, I beseech you, consider and think,
 Or else in your nose, and likewise in your toes,
 You'll discover the color of Burgundy rose :
 Burgundy rose, Burgundy rose,
 A dangerous symptom is Burgundy rose.

'Tis a very nice wine, and as mellow as milk,
 'Tis a very nice color in satin or silk ;
 But you'll change your opinion as soon as it shows
 In a halo around the extreme of your nose :
 Burgundy rose, Burgundy rose,
 'Tis a very bad thing at the tip of your toes.

"Well, madame, how do you like it so far as we have got?" says the lieutenant as Bell is extemporizing a somewhat wild variation of the air.

"I think your young English friend gave you very good advice; and I have

no doubt the students needed it very much."

"But you shall hear what he says: he was not a teetotaler at all." And there-with the lieutenant continued:

If tittle you must in beer, spirits or wine,
 There are wholesome vintages hail from the Rhine;
 And, take the advice of a fellow who knows,
 Hochheimer's as gentle as any that goes :
 Burgundy rose, Burgundy rose,
 Doth never appear from the wine I propose.

Burgundy isn't a good thing to drink :
 Young man, I beseech you, consider and think,
 Or else in your nose, and likewise in your toes,
 You'll discover the color of Burgundy rose :
 Burgundy rose, Burgundy rose,
 A fatal affliction is Burgundy rose !

"Oh, you two scapegraces!" cried Queen Titania. "I know now why you were laying your heads together this morning and poring over that sheet of paper: you were engaged in perverting an honest and well-intentioned song into a recommendation of German wines. I am sure that third verse is not in the original. I am certain the young English student never wrote it. It was written in Worcester this very morning; and I call on you to produce the original, so that we can cut out this very bad moral that has been introduced."

"The original, madame?" said the lieutenant gravely. "There is no original. I have repeated it most from memory—as he used to sing it at Bonn—and I put it down on paper only that mademoiselle might correct me about the words. No, I have put in no moral. You think your countryman did not like the Rhine wines? Pfui!—you should have seen him drink them, then, if he did not like them! And the very dear ones, too, for he had plenty of money; and we poor devils of the Germans used to be astonished at his extravagance, and sometimes he was called 'mildord' for a joke. When we did go to his room to the supper-parties, we could not believe that any young man not come of age should have so much money given to him by his parents. But it did not spoil him one bit: he was as good, frank, careless as any man; and when he did get to know the language better he worked hard, and had such notes of the lec-

tures as not any one I think in the whole university had."

A strange thing now occurred. We were driving along level and wooded lanes running parallel with the Severn. The small hamlets we passed, merely two or three houses smothered in elms, are appropriately named Greens—Fen Green, Dodd's Green, Bard's Green, and the like—and on either side of us were lush meadows, with the cattle standing deep in the grass. Now all at once that long bar of glimmering yellow across the western clouds burst asunder, and at the same moment a flood of light shone along all the southern sky, where there was evidently abundant rain. We had no sooner turned to look at this wild gleam than all around us there was a stir in the hedges and the tall elms by the roadside—we were enveloped in sunshine: with it came a quick pattering on the leaves, and then we found all the air glittering with white drops and slanting streaks. In the glare of the sunlight the shower shone and sparkled all around us, and the heavier it fell—until the sound of it was like the far-off hissing of the sea on a pebbly beach—the more magical grew the effects of the mingled light and wet. Nor was it a passing shower merely. The air was still filled with the gleaming lines of the rain, the sunlight still shone mistily through it and lit up the green meadows and the trees with a wonderful radiance, as we wrapped cloaks round our companions and drove leisurely on. It was impossible to think that this glowing rain could wet us like ordinary rain. But by and by it drew itself off, and then Bell, with a sudden little cry, besought the lieutenant to pull up the horses.

Had we driven under a cloud and escaped at the other edge? Close behind us there was still mingled rain and sunlight, and beyond that again the sky was heaped up with immense dark blue masses. A rainbow shone in front of this black background. A puff of white cloud ran across the darkness, telling of contrary winds. And then when we turned from this gleaming and glowing picture to continue our course, lo! all

the west had cleared, and a great dim smoke of yellow lay over the land where the sky came down.

"It is like the sea, is it not?" said Bell, raising up in the phaeton and steadying herself to look into this distant world of gold. "You expect to view the masts of ships and sea-birds flying about out there!"

And then in the cool and fresh evening, with the dusk coming on, we drove up the valley of the Severn, by Quat and Quatford, toward our resting-place for the night. As we passed by Quatford Castle, the river, lying amid the dark meadows, had caught a glow of crimson fire from the last reflection of the sunset. A blue mist lay about the sides of the abrupt hill on which the town of Bridgenorth is pitched, but as we wound round the hill to gain the easiest ascent, we came again into the clear and pallid glow of the west. It was a hard pull on the horses, just at the end of their day's work, was this steep and circuitous ascent; but at length we got into the rough streets of the old town, and in the fading twilight sought out the yellow and comfortable glow of the Crown Hotel.

We had got in passing a vague glimpse of a wide space around an old town-house, with a small crowd of people collecting. They had come to hear the playing of a volunteer band. Therefore, as we sat down to dinner, we had some very good music being played to us from without; and when at last it was gone, and the quaint old town on the top of the hill left to its ordinary silence, we found it was time to light our cigars and open the *bézique*-box. Probably no one noticed it, but it is a curious circumstance that Bell had apparently forgotten all about her determination to write to Arthur. There was no shadow of a cloud on her face, and she enjoyed the winning of various games—assisted thereto by the obvious ministrations of the lieutenant—with as much delight and careless amusement as though there was not anywhere in the world a young man sitting in his solitary chamber and wishing that he had never been born. But it was certainly not hard-heartedness

that gave to Bell the enjoyment of that one evening.

CHAPTER XIV.

But (trust me, gentles!) never yet
Was dight a masquing half so neat,
Or half so rich before;
The country lent the sweet perfumes,
The sea the pearl, the sky the plumes,
The town its silken store.

THE lieutenant was pensive. He and I had gone out for a turn before breakfast, and wandered on to the high promenade which, skirting one portion of the lofty town, looked down on the valley of the Severn, the huddled houses underneath the rocky height, and the bridge spanning the stream. It was a bright and pleasant morning, and the landscape that lay around was shining in the sun.

"England," he said, leaning his arms on the stone parapet of the walk, "is a very pleasant country to live in, I think."

I thanked him for the compliment.

"You are very free in your actions here: you do what you please. Only consider how you are at this moment."

But I had to protest against our young Prussian friend continually regarding this excursion as the normal condition of our existence. I showed him that we were not always enjoying ourselves in this fashion; that a good deal of hard work filled the long interval of the winter months; and that even Bell—whom he had grown to regard as a sort of feature of English scenery, a wild bird for ever on the wing through sunlight and green leaves—worked as hard as any of us.

"It is pleasant to be able to play dexterously on the piano or the guitar, or what not, but that accomplishment means imprisonment with hard labor stretching over years. It is very nice to be able to put on a sheet of paper, with a few rapid touches, the outlines of a scene which delights you, and to find yourself able to reproduce this afterward in water or oil, and have it publicly exhibited and sold; but do you know how much work it involves? Bell is a most untiring young woman, I promise you, and not

likely to fall asleep in counting her fingers."

"Oh, I am sure of that," he said absently. "She has too much spirit, too much life, to be indolent. But I was thinking—I was thinking whether if a man was to change his country he would choose England out of all the other countries to live in. Here it is. Your people in England who only enjoy themselves must be very rich, must they not? Is it a good country, I wonder, for a man who would have about eight hundred pounds a year?"

"Not without some occupation. But why do you ask?"

He only stared at the bushes down below us on the rocks, and at the river far below them.

"What would you say," he asked, suddenly, "if I were to come and live in England, and become naturalized, and never go back to my native country again?"

"And give up your profession, with all its interest and excitement?"

He was silent for a minute or two, and then he said, "I have done more than the service that is expected from every man in Prussia; and I do not think my country goes to war for many years to come. About the excitement of a campaign and the going into battle—well, there is much mistake about that. You are not always in enthusiasm: the long marches, the wet days, the waiting for months in one place—there is nothing heroic in that. And when you do come to the battle itself—Come, my dear friend, I will tell you something about that."

He seemed to wake up then. He rose from his recumbent position and took a look round the shining country that lay along the valley of the Severn.

"All the morning you have great gloom, and it seems as if the day is dark overhead. But this is strange—you think you can see very far, and you can see all your friends in Germany, and think you could almost speak to them. You expect to go forward to meet the enemy, and you hate him that he is waiting for you upon some of the hills or behind his

intrenchments. Then the hurry comes of getting on horseback, and you are very friendly to all your companions; and they are all very pleasant and laughing at this time, except one or two, who are thinking of their home. Your regiment is ordered forward: you do not know what to think. Perhaps you wish the enemy would run away, or that your regiment is not needed; and sometimes you have a great rush of anger toward him; but all this is so shifting, gloomy, uncertain, that you do not think two things one moment. Then you hear the sound of the firing, and your heart beats fast for a little while, and you think of all your friends in Germany; and this is the time that is the worst. You are angry with all the men who provoke wars in their courts and parliaments; and you think it is a shame you should be there to fight for them; and you look at the pleasant things you are leaving all behind in your own home, just as if you were never to see them any more. That is a very wretched and miserable time, but it does not last very long if you are ordered to advance; and then, my dear friend, you do not care one farthing for your own life—that you forget altogether—and you think no more of your friends: you do not even hate the enemy in front any more. It is all a stir, and life, and eagerness; and a warm, glad feeling runs all through your veins, and when the great 'Hurrah!' comes, and you ride forward, you think no more of yourself: you say to yourself 'Here is for my good Fatherland!'—and then—"

A sort of sob stuck in the throat of the big lieutenant.

"Bah!" said he, with a frown, as if the bright morning and the fresh air had done him an injury, "what is the use of waiting out here and killing ourselves with hunger?"

Bell was writing when we went into the hotel. As we entered she hastily shut up her small portfolio.

"Why not finish your letter, mademoiselle?" he said, gently. "It will be a little time before breakfast comes in."

"I can finish it afterward," said the girl, looking rather embarrassed.

Of course, when the lieutenant perceived that the attention thus drawn to the letter had caused her some confusion, he immediately rushed into another subject, and said to Queen Titania, with a fine affectation of carelessness, "You will laugh, madame, at our having yet another adventure in a stationer's shop."

"I think," said my lady gravely, "that I must put a stop to these wanderings about in the early morning. I cannot quite make out why you should always get up hours before anybody else; but I find that generally some story comes up afterward of a young lady."

"But there is no young lady this time," said the lieutenant, "but a very worthy man whom we found in the stationer's shop. And he has been at Sedan, and he has brought back the breech of a mitrailleuse and showed it all to us; and he has written a small book about his being in France, and did present us with a copy of it, and would not take any payment for it. Oh, he is a very remarkable and intelligent man to be found in a stationer's shop up in this curious old town on the top of a hill; but then I discovered he is a Scotchman, and do you not say here that a Scotchman is a great traveler, and is to be found everywhere? And I have looked into the little book, and I think it very sensible and good, and a true account of what he has seen."

"Then I presume he extols your countrymen?" says my lady, with a smile.

"Madame," replies the lieutenant, "I may assure you of this, that a man who has been in a campaign and seen both the armies, does not think either nation a nation of angels and the other a nation of demons. To believe one nation to have all the good, and another nation to have all the bad, that can only be believed by people who have seen none of them. I think my friend the stationer has written so much of what he saw that he had no time for imaginations about the character of two whole countries."

At this moment the introduction of breakfast broke our talk in this direction. After breakfast Bell finished her letter. She asked the lieutenant to get it

stamped and posted for her, and handed it openly to him. But, without looking at it, he must have known that it was addressed to "Arthur Ashburton, Esq., Essex court, Temple."

"Well," said Bell, coming down stairs with her hat on, "let us go out now and see the old town. It must be a very pleasant old place. And the day is so fine—don't you think we have had quite exceptional weather hitherto, Count von Rosen?"

Of course he said the weather had been lovely; but how was it that Bell was so sure beforehand that she would be delighted with Bridgenorth? The delight was already in her face and beaming in her eyes. She knew the weather was fine. She was certain we should have a pleasant drive during the day, and was certain the country through which we had to pass would be charming. The observant reader will remark that a certain letter had been posted.

Really, Bridgenorth was pleasant enough on this bright morning, albeit the streets on the river-side part of the town were distinctly narrow, dirty and smoky. First of all, however, we visited the crumbling walls of Robert de Belesme's mighty tower. Then we took the women round the high promenade over the valley. Then we went down through a curious and precipitous passage hewn out of the sandstone hill to the lower part of the town, and visited the old building in which Bishop Percy was born, the inscription* on which, by the way, is a standing testimony to the playful manner in which this nation has at various times dealt with its aspirates. Then we clambered up the steep streets again until we reached the great central square, with its quaint town-house and old-fashioned shops. A few minutes thereafter we were in the phaeton, and Castor and Pollux taking us into the open country.

"Mademoiselle," said the lieutenant—the young man was like a mavis, with

this desire of his to sing or hear singing just after his morning meal—"you have not sung to us anything for a long while now."

"But I will this morning, with great pleasure," said Bell.

"Then," said Von Rosen, "here is your guitar. When I saw you come down to go out this morning, I said to myself, 'Mademoiselle is sure to sing to-day.' So I kept out the guitar-case."

The horses pricked up their ears. The cords of the guitar twanged out a few notes. The fresh breeze blew by from the fields, and as we drove through the stillness of one or two straggling woods, Bell sang—

If enemies oppose us,
And England is at war
With any foreign nation,
We fear not wound or scar.
To humble them, come on, lads!
Their flags we'll soon lay low:
Clear the way for the fray,
Though the stormy winds do blow!

"Mademoiselle," cries the lieutenant, "it is a challenge."

Bell laughed, and suddenly altered the key.

Fair Hebe I left with a cautious design—
this was what she sang now—

To escape from her charms and to drown love in wine:
I tried it, but found, when I came to depart,
The wine in my head, but still love in my heart.

"Well!" said Tita, with an air of astonishment, "that is a pretty song for a young lady to sing!"

Bell laid down the guitar.

"And what," I ask of Queen Titania, "are the sentiments of which alone a young lady may sing? Not patriotism? Not love? Not despair? Goodness gracious! Don't you remember what old Joe Blatchers said when he brought us word that some woman in his neighborhood had committed suicide?"

"What did he say?" asked the lieutenant, who was of an inquiring turn of mind.

"The wretched woman had drowned herself because her husband had died; and old Joe brought us the story with the serious remark, 'The ladies 'as their feelin's, 'asn't they, sir, arter all?' May not a young lady sing of anything but

* The inscription inside the door of this old-fashioned building, which is ornamented by bars of black and white, and peaked gables, is as follows:

"Except the LORD BUILD THE OWSE
The Labourers thereof avail nothing
Erected by R For * 1580."

the joy of decorating a church on Christmas Eve?"

"I have never been taught to perceive the humor of profanity," says my lady with a serene impassiveness.

"Curious, if true! Perhaps you were never taught that a white elephant isn't the same as a rainbow or a pack of cards?"

"My dear," says Tita, turning to Bell, "what is that French song that you brought over with you from Dieppe?"

Thus appealed to, Bell took up her guitar and sang for us a very pretty song. It was not exactly French, to be sure. It began—

'Twas frost and thro' leet, wid a greyming o' snaw,
When I went to see Biddy, the flow'r o' them aw:
To meet was agreed on at Seyway' deyke nuik,
Where I sauntered wi' mony a seegh and lang luik.

But good honest Cumberlandshire is quite as foreign to most of us as French; and no exception could be taken to the sentiment of Bell's ballad, for none of us could understand six consecutive words of it.

Much-Wenlock is a quiet town—about as quiet as the spacious and grassy enclosure in which the magnificent ruins of its old monastery stand gray and black in the sunshine. There are many strange passages and courts in these noble ruins; and as you pass through broken arches, and wander over courtyards half hid in the long green grass, it is but natural that a preference for solitude should betray itself in one or other of the members of a noisy little party. We lost sight of Bell and the lieutenant. There was a peacock strutting through the grass, and making his resplendent tail gleam in the sunshine; and they followed him, I think. When we came upon them again, Bell was seated on a bit of tumbled pillar, pulling daisies out of the sward and plaiting them, and the lieutenant was standing by her side, talking to her in a low voice. It was no business of ours to interfere with this pastoral occupation. Doubtless he spoke in these low tones because of the great silence of the place. We left them there, and had another saunter before we returned. We were almost

sorry to disturb them, for they made a pretty group, these two young folks, talking leisurely to each other under the solemn magnificence of the great gray ruins, while the sunlight that lit up the ivy on the walls, and threw black shadows under the arches of the crumbling windows, and lay warm on the long grass around them, touched Bell's cheek too, and glimmered down one side of the loose masses of her hair.

Castor and Pollux were not allowed much time for lunch, for, as the young people had determined to go to the theatre on reaching Shrewsbury, their elders, warned by a long experience, knew that the best preparation for going to a country theatre is to dine before setting out. My lady did not anticipate much enjoyment, but Bell was positive we should be surprised.

"We have been out in the country so much, seeing so much of the sunlight and the green trees, and living at those little inns, that we ought to have a country theatre as well. Who knows but that we may have left all our London ideas of a play in London, and find ourselves quite delighted with the simple folk who are always uttering good sentiments, and quite enraged with the bad man who is wishing them ill. I think Count von Rosen was quite right—"

Of course Count von Rosen was quite right!

"—about commonplace things only having become commonplace through our familiarity with them," continued Miss Bell: "perhaps we may find ourselves going back a bit, and being as much impressed by a country drama as any of the farmer-folk who do not see half a dozen plays in their life. And then, you know, what a big background we shall have!—not the walls of the little theatre, but all the great landscape we have been coming through. Round about us we shall see the Severn, and the long woods, and Broadway Hill—"

"And not forgetting Bourton Hill," says the lieutenant. "If only they do give us a good moonlight scene like that, we shall be satisfied."

"Oh no," said Bell gravely—she was

evidently launching into one of her unconscious flights, for her eyes took no more notice of us, but were looking wistfully at the pleasant country around us—"that is asking far too much. It is easier for you to make the moonlight scene than for the manager. You have only to imagine it is there—shut your eyes a little bit, and fancy you hear the people on the stage talking in a real scene, with the real country around and the real moonlight in the air. And then you grow to believe in the people, and you forget that they are only actors and actresses working for their salaries, and you think it is a true story, like the stories they tell up in Westmoreland of things that happened in the villages years ago. That is one of the great pleasures of driving—that it gives you a sense of wide space. There is a great deal of air and sky about it, and you have a pleasant and easy way of getting through it, as if you were really sailing; whereas the railway whisks you through the long intervals, and makes your journey a succession of dots. That is an unnatural way of traveling, that staccato method of—"

Here mademoiselle caught sight of Queen Tita gravely smiling, and immediately paused to find out what she had been saying.

"Well?" she said, expecting to be corrected or reproved, and calmly resolved to bear the worst.

But how could Tita explain? She had been amused by the manner in which the young lady had unconsciously caught up a trick of the lieutenant's in the construction of his sentences—the use of "that" as the introductory nominative, the noun coming in afterward. For the moment the subject dropped, in the excitement of our getting once more back to the Severn; and when Bell spoke next it was to ask the lieutenant whether the Wrekin—a solitary, abrupt and conical hill on our right which was densely wooded to the top—did not in a milder form reproduce the odd masses of rock that stud the great plain west of the Lake of Constance.

A pleasant drive through a fine stretch

of open country took us into Shrewsbury; and here, having got over the bridge and up the steep thoroughfares to our hotel, dinner was immediately ordered. When at length we made our way round to the theatre it was about half-past seven, and the performance was to commence at twenty minutes to eight.

"Oh, Bell!" says my lady as we enter the building. She looks blankly round. From the front of the dress-circle we are peering into a great hollow place dimly lighted by ten lamps, each of one burner, that throw a sepulchral light on long rows of wooden benches, on a sad-colored curtain and an empty orchestra. How is all the force of Bell's imagination to drive off these walls and this depressing array of carpentry, and substitute for them a stage of greensward and walls composed of the illimitable sky? There is an odor of escaped gas and of oranges; but when did any people ever muster up enough of gayety to eat an orange in this gloomy hall?

7.40, by Shrewsbury clock.—An old gentleman and a boy appear in the orchestra. The former is possessed of a bass-viol—the latter proceeds to tune up a violin.

7.50—which is the time for commencing the play—three ladies come into the pit. The first is a farmer's wife, fat, ostentatious, confident, in a black silk that rustles: the two others are apparently friends of hers in the town, who follow her meekly and take their seats with a frightened air. She sits down with a proud gesture, and this causes a thin cackle of laughter and a rude remark far up in the semi-darkness overhead, so that we gather that there are probably two persons in the upper gallery.

7.55.—Two young ladies—perhaps shop-girls, but their extreme blushing gives them a countrified look—come into the pit, talk in excited whispers to each other, and sit down with an uncomfortable air of embarrassment. At this moment the orchestra startles us by dashing into a waltz from "Faust." There are now five men and a boy in this tuneful choir. One of them starts vigorously on the cornet, but invariably

fails to get beyond the first few notes, so that the flute beats him hollow. Again and again the cornet strikes in at the easy parts, but directly he subsides again, and the flute has it all his own way. The music ceases. The curtain is drawn up. The play has begun.

The first act is introductory. There is a farmer, whose chief business it is to announce that "his will is law;" and he has a son, addressed throughout as Weelyam, whom he wishes to marry a particular girl. The son, of course, has married another. The villain appears and takes us into his confidence, giving us to understand that a worse villain never trod the earth. He has an interview with the farmer, but this is suddenly broken off: a whistle in some part of the theatre is heard, and we are conveyed to an Italian lake, all shining with yellow villas and blue skies.

"That is the problem stated," said the lieutenant: "now we shall have the solution. But do you find the walls going away yet, mademoiselle?"

"I think it is very amusing," said Bell, with a bright look on her face. Indeed, if she had not brought in with her sufficient influence from the country to resolve the theatre into thin air, she had imbibed a vast quantity of good health and spirits there, so that she was prepared to enjoy anything.

The plot thickens. The woman-villain appears—a lady dressed in deep black—who tells us in an awful voice that she was the mistress of Weelyam in France, that being the country naturally associated in the mind of the dramatist with crimes of this character. She is in a pretty state when she learns that Weelyam is married, and events are plainly marching on to a crisis. It comes. The marriage is revealed to the farmer, who delivers a telling curse, which is apparently launched at the upper gallery, but which is really meant to confound Weelyam: then the old man falls—there is a tableau—the curtain comes down, and the band, by some odd stroke of luck, plays "Home, Sweet Home," as an air descriptive of Weelyam's banishment.

We become objects of curiosity, now that the adventures of the farmer's son are removed. There are twenty-one people in the pit, representing conjointly a solid guinea transferred to the treasury. One or two gay young men, with canes, and their hats much on the sides of their heads, have entered the dress-circle, stared for a minute or two at the stage, and retired.

They are probably familiar with rustic drama, and hold it in contempt. A good ballet, now, would be more in their way, performed by a troupe of young ladies whose names are curiously like English names, with imposing French and Italian terminations. A gentleman comes into the pit along with a friend, nods familiarly to the attendant, deposits his friend, utters a few facetious remarks, and leaves: can it be that he is a reporter of a local newspaper, dowered with the privilege of free admission for "himself and one"? There must at least be three persons in the upper gallery, for a new voice is heard, calling out the graceful but not unfamiliar name of "Polly." One of the two rose-red maidens in front of us timidly looks up, and is greeted with a shout of recognition and laughter. She drops into her old position in a second, and hangs down her head, while her companion protests in an indignant way in order to comfort her. The curtain rises.

The amount of villainy in this Shrewsbury drama is really getting beyond a joke. We are gradually rising in the scale of dark deeds, until the third villain, who now appears, causes the previous two to be regarded as innocent lambs. This new performer of crime is a highwayman, and his very first act is to shoot Weelyam's father and rob him of his money. But, lo! the French adventuress drops from the clouds! The highwayman is her husband: she tells of her awful deeds, among them of her having murdered "her mistress the archduchess;" and then, as she vows she will go and murder Weelyam, a tremendous conflict of everybody ensues, and a new scene being run on, we are suddenly whirled up to Balmoral Castle.

"I am beginning to be very anxious about the good people," remarked Tita. "I am afraid William will be killed."

"Unless he has as many lives as Plutarch, he can't escape," said Bell.

"As for the old farmer," observed the lieutenant, "he survives apoplectic fits and pistol-shots very well—oh, very well indeed. He is a very good man in a play. He is sure to last to the end."

Well, we were near the end, and author, carpenter and scene-painter had done their dead best to render the final scene impressive. It was in a cavern. Cimmerian darkness prevailed. The awful lady in black haunts the gloomy byways of the cave, communing with herself, and twisting her arms so that the greatest agony is made visible. But what is this hooded and trembling figure that approaches? Once in the cavern, the hood is thrown off, and the palpitating heroine comes forward for a second to the low footlights, merely that there shall be no mistake about her identity. The gloom deepens. The young and innocent wife encounters the French adventuress: the woman who did not scruple to murder her mistress the arch-duchess seizes the girl by her hands—shrieks are heard—the two figures twist round one another—then a mocking shout of laughter, and Weelyam's wife is precipitated into the hideous waters of the lake! But, lo! the tread of innumerable feet: from all quarters of the habitable globe stray wanderers arrive. With a shout Weelyam leaps into the lake; and when it is discovered that he has saved his wife, behold! everybody in the play is found to be around him, and with weeping and with laughter all the story is told, and the drama ends in the most triumphant and comfortable manner, in the middle of the night, in a cavern a hundred miles from anywhere.

"No," said Queen Titania, distinctly, "I will *not* stay to see La Champagne Ballet or the Pas de Fascination."

So there was nothing for it but to take the ungrateful creature back to the hotel and give her tea and a novel. As for the billiard-room in that hotel, it is one of the best between London and Edin-

burgh. The lieutenant begs to add that he can recommend the beer.

CHAPTER XV.

"LA PATRIE EN DANGER."

By the dim side of this enchanted lake,
I, Baldwin, doubting stand.

I SIT down to write this chapter with a determination to be generous, calm and moderate in the last degree. The man who would triumph over the wife of his bosom merely to have the pleasure of saying "I told you so," does not deserve to have his path through life sweetened by any such tender companionship. Far be it from me to recall the protestations which my lady affixed to the first portion of this narrative on its publication. Not for worlds would I inquire into her motives for being so anxious to see Arthur go. The ways of a woman ought to be intricate, occult, perplexing, if only to preserve something of the mystery of life around her, and to serve her also as a refuge from the coarse and rude logic of the actual world. The foolish person who, to prove himself right, would drive his wife into a corner and demonstrate to her that she was wrong—that she had been guilty of small prevarications, of trifling bits of hypocrisy, and of the use of various arts to conceal her real belief and definite purpose—the man who would thus wound the gentle spirit by his side to secure the petty gratification of proving himself to have been something of a twopenny-halfpenny prophet— But these remarks are premature at the present moment, and I go on to narrate the events which happened on the day of our leaving Shrewsbury and getting into the solitary region of the meres.

"I have received a telegram from Arthur," says Bell calmly, and the pink sheet is lying on the breakfast-table before her.

"How did you get it?" says my lady with some surprise.

"At the post-office."

"Then you have been out?"

"Yes, we went for a short walk after

having waited for you," says Bell, looking down.

"Oh, madame," says the lieutenant, coming forward from the fireplace, "you must not go away from the town without seeing it well. It is handsome, and the tall poplars down by the side of the river, they are worth going to see by themselves."

"It was very pretty this morning," continued Bell, "when the wind was blowing about the light blue smoke, and the sun was shining down on the slates and the clumps of trees. We went to a height on the other side of the river, and I have made a sketch of it—"

"Pray," says my lady, regarding our ward severely, "when did you go out this morning?"

"Perhaps about an hour and a half ago," replies Bell carelessly: "I don't exactly know."

"More than that, I think," says the lieutenant, "for, with mademoiselle's permission, I did smoke two cigars before we came back. It is much to our credit to go so early, and not anything to be blamed of."

"I am glad Bell is improving in that respect," retorts my lady with a wicked smile; and then she adds, "Well?"

"He has started," is the reply to that question.

"And is going by another route?"

"Yes: in a dog-cart—by himself. Don't you think it is very foolish of him, Tita? You know what accidents occur with those dog-carts."

"Mademoiselle, do not alarm yourself," says the lieutenant, folding up his newspaper. "It is a very singular thing there are so many accidents in driving, and so very seldom any one hurt. You ask your friends—yes, they have all had accidents in their riding and driving, they have all been in great danger, but what have they suffered?—nothing! Sometimes a man is killed—yes, one out of several millions in the year. And if he tumbles over—which is likely if he does not know much of horses and driving—what then? No, there is no fear: we shall see him some day very well, and go on all together."

"Oh, shall we?" says my lady, evidently regarding this as a new idea.

"Certainly. Do you think he goes that way always? Impossible. He will tire of it. He will study the roads across to meet us. He will overtake us with his light little dog-cart: we shall have his company along the road."

Tita did not at all look so well satisfied with this prospect of meeting an old friend as she might have done.

"And when are you to hear from him next?" I inquire of mademoiselle.

"He will either write or telegraph to each of the big towns along our route, on the chance of the message intercepting us somewhere; and so we shall know where he is."

"And he has really started?"

Bell placed the telegram in my hands. It was as follows:

"Have set out by Hatfield, Huntingdon and York for Edinburgh. Shall follow the real old coach-road to Scotland, and am certain to find much entertainment."

"For man and beast," struck in the lieutenant. "And I know of a friend of mine traveling in your country who went into one of these small inns and put up his horse, and when they brought him in his luncheon to the parlor, he only looked at it and said, 'Very good, waiter: this is very nice, but where is the entertainment for the man?'"

I continued to read the telegram aloud:

"Shall probably be in Edinburgh before you; but will telegraph or write to each big town along your route, that you may let me know where you are."

"It is very obliging," says the lieutenant, with a shrug of his shoulders.

"It is quite certain," observes my lady with decision, "that he must not accompany us in his dog-cart; for we shall arrive at plenty of inns where they could not possibly put up three horses and so many people."

"It would have been so," said the lieutenant, "at the place on the top of the hill—Bourton was it called?"

The mere notion of Arthur coming in to spoil the enjoyment of the rare even-

ing was so distressing that we all took refuge in breakfast, after which we went for a long and leisurely stroll through Shrewsbury, and then had Castor and Pollux put into the phaeton. It seemed now to us to matter little at what town we stayed. We had almost begun to forget the various points of the journey. It was enough that some hospitable place—whether it were city, town or hamlet—afforded us shelter for the night, that on the next morning we could issue forth again into the sweet-smelling country air, and have all the fair green world to ourselves. We looked with a lenient eye upon the great habitations of men. What if a trifle of coal-smoke hung about the house-tops, and that the streets were not quite so clean as they might be? We suffered little from these inconveniences. They only made us rejoice the more to get out into the leafy lanes, where the air was fresh with the scent of the bean-fields and the half-dried hay. And when a town happened to be picturesque—and it was our good fortune to find a considerable number of handsome cities along our line of route—and combined with its steep streets, its old-fashioned houses, and its winding river and banks, a fair proportion of elms and poplars scattered about in clumps to mar the monotony of the gray fronts and the blue slates, we paid such a tribute of admiration as could only be obtained from people who knew they would soon be emancipated from the din and clamor, the odor and the squalor of thoroughfares and pavements.

Bell, sitting very erect and holding the whip and reins in the most accurate and scientific fashion, was driving us leisurely up the level and pleasant road leading from Shrewsbury to Ellesmere. The country was now more open and less hilly than that through which we had recently come. Occasionally, as in the neighborhood of Harmer Hill, we drove by dense woods, but for the most part our route lay between long stretches of meadows, fields and farms, with the horizon around lying blue and dark under the distant sky. The morning had gradually become overcast, and the

various greens of the landscape were darkened by the placid gray overhead. There was little wind, but a prevailing coolness that seemed to have something of premonitory moistness in it.

But how the birds sang under the silence of that cold gray sky! We seemed to hear all the sounds within a great compass, and these were exclusively the innumerable notes of various birds—in the hedges and in the roadside trees, far away in woods or hidden up in the level grayness of the clouds. *Tewi, tewi, tewi, trrrr-weet!*—*droom, droom, phlaee!*—*tuck, tuck, tuck, tuck, feer!*—that was the silvery chorus from thousands of throats, and under the darkness of the gray sky the leaves of the trees and the woods seemed to hang motionless in order to listen. Now and again Bell picked out the call of a thrush or a blackbird from the almost indistinguishable mass of melody, but it seemed to us that all the fields and the hedges had but one voice, and that it was clear and sweet and piercing in the strange silence reigning over the land.

So we rolled along the unfrequented road, occasionally passing a wayside tavern, a farmhouse or a cluster of cottages, until about noon we caught a glimpse of a stretch of gray water. On this lonely mere no boat was to be seen, nor any house on its banks—merely a bit of leaden-colored water placed amid the low-lying woods. Then we caught the glimmer of another sheet of cold gray water, and by and by, driving under and through an avenue of trees, we came full in sight of Ellesmere.

The small lake looked rather dismal then. There was a slight stirring of wind on its surface, which destroyed the reflection of the woods along its shores, and so the water was pretty much the counterpart of the gloomy sky above. At this moment, too, the moisture in the air began to touch our faces, and everything portended a shower. Bell drove us past the mere and on to the small village, where Castor and Pollux were safely lodged in the stables of the "Bridgewater Arms."

We had got into shelter just in time.

Down came the rain with a will, but we were unconcernedly having luncheon in a long apartment which the landlord had recently added on to his premises. Then we darted across the yard to the billiard-room, where, Bell and my lady having taken up lofty positions in order to overlook the tournament, we proceeded to knock the balls about until the shower should cease.

The rain, however, showed no symptoms of leaving off, so we resolved to remain at Ellesmere that night, and the rest of the afternoon was spent in getting up arrears of correspondence and similar work. It was not until after dinner that it was found the rain-clouds had finally gathered themselves together, and then, when we went out for a stroll in obedience to Bell's earnest prayer, the evening had drawn on apace.

The darkening waters of the lake were now surrounded by low clouds of white mist, that hung about the wet woods. From the surface of the mere, too, a faint vapor seemed to rise, so that the shores on the other side had grown dim and vague. The trees were still dropping large drops into the streaming road; runnels of water showed how heavy the rain had been; and it seemed as if the gray and ghastly plain of the lake were still stirred by the commotion of the showers. The reflection of a small yacht out from the shore was blurred and indistinct, and underneath the wooded island beyond there only reigned a deeper gloom on the water.

Of course, no reasonable person could have thought of going out in a boat on this moist evening; but Bell having expressed some wish of the kind, the lieutenant forthwith declared we should soon have a boat, however late the hour. He dragged us through a wet garden to a house set amid trees by the side of the mere. He summoned a worthy woman, and overcame her wonder and objections and remonstrances in about a couple of minutes. In a very short space of time we found ourselves in a massive and unwieldy punt out in the middle of this gray sheet of water, with the darkness of night rapidly descending.

"We shall all have neuralgia and rheumatism and colds to-morrow," said my lady contentedly. "And all because of this mad girl, who thinks she can see ghosts wherever there is a little mist. Bell, do you remember—"

Tita stopped suddenly and grasped my arm. A white something had suddenly borne down upon us, and not for a second or two did we recognize the fact that it was a swan bent on a mission of curiosity. Far away beyond this solitary animal there now became visible a faint line of white, and we knew that there the members of his tribe were awaiting his report.

The two long oars plashed in the silence, we glided onward in the gloom, and the woods of the opposite shore were now coming near. But what was this new light that seemed to be coming from over the trees—a faint glow that began to tell upon the sky and reveal to us the conformation of the clouds? The mists of the lake deepened, but the sky lightened, and we could see breaks in it, long stripes of a soft and pale yellow. Bell had not uttered a word. She had been watching this growing light with patient eyes, only turning at times to see how the island was becoming more distinct in the darkness. And then more and more rapidly the light spread up and over the south-east, the clouds seemed to get thinner and thinner, until all at once we saw the white glimmer of the disk of the moon leap into a long crevice in the dark sky, and lo! all the scene around us was changed; the mists seemed to be dispersed and driven to the shores; the trees on the island were sharp black bars against a flood of light; and on the dark bosom of the water lay a long lane of silver, intertwisting itself with millions of gleaming lines, and flashing on the ripples that were sent back from the rocking of our boat.

"Every day, I think," said Bell, "we come to something more beautiful in this journey."

"Mademoiselle," said the lieutenant suddenly, "your country it has been too much for me: I have resolved to come to live here always, and in five years, if

I choose it, I shall be able to be naturalized and consider England as my own country."

The moonlight was touching softly at this moment the outline of Bell's face, but the rest of the face was in shadow, and we could not see what evidence of surprise was written there.

"You are not serious," she said.

"I am."

"And you mean to give up your country because you like the scenery of another country?"

That, plainly put, was what the proposal of the count amounted to as he had expressed it, but even he seemed somewhat taken aback by its apparent absurdity.

"No," he said, "you must not put it all down to one reason: there are many reasons, some of them important; but at all events it is sure that if I come to live in England, I shall not be disappointed of having much pleasure in traveling."

"With you it may be different," said Bell, almost repeating what I had said the day before to the young man. "I wish we could always be traveling and meeting with such pleasant scenes as this. But this holiday is a very exceptional thing."

"Worse luck!" said the lieutenant, with the air of a man who thinks he is being hardly used by destiny.

"But tell me," broke in my lady, as the boat lay in the path of the moonlight, almost motionless, "have you calculated the consequences of your becoming an exile?"

"An exile! There are many thousands of my countrymen in England: they do not seem to suffer much of regret because they are exiles."

"Suppose we were to go to war with Germany?"

"Madame," observed the lieutenant, seriously, "if you regard one possibility, why not another? Should I not hesitate of living in England for fear of a comet striking your country rather than striking Germany? No: I do not think there is any chance of either; but if there is a war, then I consider whether

I am more bound to Germany or to England. And that is a question of the ties you may form, which may be more strong than merely that you chance to have been born in a particular place."

"These are not patriotic sentiments," remarks my lady in a voice which shows she is pleased as well as amused by the announcement of them.

"Patriotism!" he said: "that is very good, but you need not make it a fetich. Perhaps I have more right to be patriotic in a country that I choose for my own than in a country where I am born without any choice of my own. But I do not find my countrymen when they come to England much troubled by such things; and I do not think your countrymen when they go to America consult the philosophers and say what they would do in a war. If you will allow me to differ with you, madame, I do not think that is a great objection to my living in England."

An objection—coming from her! The honest lieutenant meant no sarcasm, but if a blush remained in my lady's system—which is pretty well trained, I admit, to repress such symptoms of consciousness—surely it ought to have been visible on this clear moonlight night.

At length we had to make for the shore. It seemed as though we were leaving out there on the water all the white wonder of the moon; but when we had run the boat into the boat-house and got up among the trees, there too was the strong white light, gleaming on black branches and throwing bars of shadow across the pale, brown road. We started on our way back to the village by the margin of the mere. The mists seemed colder here than out on the water, and now we could see the moonlight struggling with a faint white haze that lay over all the surface of the lake. My lady and Bell walked on in front—the lieutenant was apparently desirous to linger a little behind.

"You know," he said, in a low voice and with a little embarrassment, "why I have resolved to live in England."

"I can guess."

"I mean to ask mademoiselle to-morrow—if I have the chance—if she will become my wife."

"You will be a fool for your pains."

"What is that phrase? I do not comprehend it," he said.

"You will make a mistake if you do. She will refuse you."

"And well?" he said. "Does not every man run the chance of that? I will not blame her—no; but it is better I should ask her, and be assured of this one way or the other."

"You do not understand. Apart from all other considerations, Bell would almost certainly object to entertaining such a proposal after a few days' acquaintanceship—"

"A few days!" he exclaimed. "*Du Himmel!* I have known her years and years ago—very well we were acquainted—"

"But the acquaintanceship of a boy is nothing. You are almost a stranger to her now—"

"See here," he urged. "We do know more of each other in this week or two than if I had seen her for many seasons of your London society. We have seen each other at all times, under all ways—not mere talking in a dance, and so forth."

"But you know she has not definitely broken off with Arthur yet."

"Then the sooner the better," said the lieutenant bluntly. "How is it you do all fear him, and the annoyance of his coming? Is a young lady likely to have much sympathy for him, when he is very disagreeable and rude and angry? Now, this is what I think about him. I am afraid mademoiselle is very sorry to tell him to go away. They are old friends. But she would like him to go away, for he is very jealous and angry and rude; and so I go to her and say—No, I will not tell you what my argument is, but I hope I will show mademoiselle it will be better if she will promise to be my wife, and then this pitiful fellow he will be told not to distress her any more. If she says No, it is a misfortune for me, but none to her. If she says Yes, then I will look out that she

is not any more annoyed—that is quite certain."

"I hope you don't wish to marry merely to rescue a distressed damsel?"

"Bah!" he said: "you know it is not that. But you English people, you always make your jokes about these things—not very good jokes either—and do not talk frankly about it. When madame comes to hear of this—and if mademoiselle is good enough not to cast me away—it will be a hard time for us, I know, from morning until night. But have I not told you what I have considered this young lady—so very generous in her nature, and not thinking of herself—so very frank and good-natured to all people around her—and of a good, light heart, that shows she can enjoy the world, and is of a happy disposition, and will be a very noble companion for the man who marries her. I would tell you much more, but I cannot in your language."

At all events, he had picked up a good many flattering adjectives: mademoiselle's dowry in that respect was likely to be considerable.

Here we got back to the inn. Glasses were brought in, and we had a final game of *béziq*ue before retiring for the night; but the lieutenant's manner toward Bell was singularly constrained and almost distant, and he regarded her occasionally in a somewhat timid and anxious way.

[*Note by Queen Titania.*]—"It is perhaps unnecessary for me to explain that I am not responsible for the foolish notions that may enter the heads of two young people when they are away for a holiday. But I must protest against the insinuation—conveyed in a manner which I will not describe—that I was throughout scheming against Arthur's suit with our Bell. That poor boy is the son of two of my oldest friends, and for himself we have always had the greatest esteem and liking. If he caused us some annoyance at this time, he had probably a little excuse for it—which is more than *some people* can say, when they have long ago got over the jealous-

ies of courtship, and yet do not cease to persecute their wives with cruel jests—and it is most unfair to represent me as being blind to his peculiar situation or unmerciful toward himself. On the contrary, I am sure I did everything I could to smooth over the unpleasant incidents of his visit; but I did not find it incumbent on me to become a *partisan*, and spend hours in getting up philosophical—*philosophical!*—excuses for a rude-

ness which was really unpardonable. As for Count von Rosen, if he made up his mind to ask Bell to be his wife because Ellesmere looked pretty when the moon came out, I cannot help it. It is some years since I gave up the idea of attempting to account for the odd freaks and impulses that get into the brains of what we must call the *superior sex*."



PART VI.

CHAPTER XVI.

OUR UHLAN OUT-MANŒUVRED.

Come down, come down, my bonnie bird,
And eat bread aff my hand;
Your cage shall be of wiry goud,
Whar now it's but the wand.

"YOU are the most provoking husband I ever met with," says Queen Titania.

We are climbing up the steep ascent which leads from the village of Ellesmere to the site of an ancient castle. The morning is full of a breezy sunshine, and the cool north-wester stirs here and there a gray ripple on the blue waters of the lake.

"I hope you have not had much experience in that direction," I observe.

"Very pretty! That is very nice indeed! We are improving, are we not?" she says, turning to Bell.

Bell, who has a fine color in her face from the light breeze and the brisk walking, puts her hand affectionately within her friend's arm, and says in gentle accents, "It is a shame to tease you so, you poor innocent little thing! But we will have our revenge. We will ask somebody else to protect you, my pet lamb!"

"Lamb!—hm! Not much of the lamb visible, but a good deal of the vinegar sauce," says one of us, mindful of past favors.

It was a deadly quarrel. I think it had arisen out of Tita's inability to discover which way the wind was blowing, but the origin of our sham-fights had seldom much to do with their subsequent rise and progress.

"I wish I had married *you*, Count von Rosen," says my lady, turning proudly and graciously to her companion on the right.

"Don't alarm the poor man," I say; and indeed the lieutenant looked quite aghast.

"Madame," he replied gravely when he had recovered himself, "it is very kind of you to say so; and if you had made me the offer sooner, I should have accepted it with great pleasure. But would there have been any difference? No, I think not—perhaps it would be the worse. It is merely that you are married, and you make believe to chafe against the bonds. Now, I think you two would be very agreeable to each other if you were not married."

"Ah, well," said Tita, with an excellently constructed sigh, "I suppose we must look on marriage as a trial, and bear it with meekness and patience. We shall have our reward elsewhere."

Bell laughed in a demure manner. The calm assumption of the virtues of meekness and patience was a little too much, but what was the use of further fighting on a morning like this? We got the key of a small gate. We climbed up a winding path through trees that were rustling in the sunlight. We emerged upon a beautiful green lawn—a bowling-green, in fact, girt in by a low hedge, and overlooked by a fancy little building. But the great charm of this elevated site was the panorama around and beyond. Windy clouds of white and gray kept rolling up out of the west, throwing splashes of purple gloom on the bright landscape: The trees waved and murmured in the cool breeze—the sunlight kept chasing the shadows across the far meadows. And then down below us lay the waters of Ellesmere lake—here and there a deep, dark blue under the warm green of the woods, and here and there being stirred into a shimmer of white by the wind that was sweeping across the sky.

"And to-day we shall be in Chester, and to-morrow in Wales!" cried Bell, looking away up to the north, where the sky was pretty well heaped up with the

flying masses of cloud. She looked so bright and joyous then that one could almost have expected her to take flight herself, and disappear like a wild bird amid the shifting lights and glooms of the windy day. The lieutenant, indeed, seemed continually regarding her in rather an anxious and embarrassed fashion. Was he afraid she might escape? or was he merely longing to get an opportunity of plunging into that serious business he had spoken of the night before? Bell was all unconscious. She put her hand within Tita's arm, and walked away over the green lawn, which was warm in the sunshine. We heard them talking of a picnic on this lofty and lonely spot—sketching out tents, archery-grounds and what not, and assigning a place to the band. Then there were rumors of the "Haymakers," of "Sir Roger de Coverley," of the "Guaracha," and I know not what other nonsense, coming toward us as the north-wester blew back to us fragments of their talk, until even the lieutenant remarked that an old-fashioned country dance would look very pretty up here on such a fine piece of green, and with all the blue and breezy extent of a great English landscape forming the circular walls of this magnificent ball-room.

A proposal is an uncomfortable thing to carry about with one. Its weight is unconscionable, and on the merriest days it will make a man down-hearted. To ask a woman to marry is about the most serious duty which a man has to perform in life, even as some would say that it is the most unnecessary; and those who settled the relations of the sexes before or after the Flood should receive the gratitude of all womankind for the ingenuity with which they shifted on to male shoulders this heavy and grievous burden.

The lieutenant walked down with us from the hill and through the little village to the inn as one distraught. He scarcely even spoke, and never to Bell. He regarded the getting out of the phaeton with a listless air. Castor and Polux—whose affection he had stolen away from us through a whole series of sneak-

ing kindnesses—whinnied to him in vain. When my lady, who now assumed the responsibility of apportioning to us our seats, asked him to drive, he obeyed mechanically.

Now Bell, as I have said, was unconscious of the awful possibilities that hung over our adventures of that day, and was in as merry a mood as you could desire to see. She sat beside the lieutenant, and scarcely had we gone gently along the narrow village street and out into the broader country road that leads northward, than she began to tell her companion of the manner in which Tita tyrannizes over our parish.

"You would not think it, would you?" she asked.

"No," said the lieutenant, "I should not think she was a very ferocious lady."

"Then you don't know her," says a voice from behind; and Tita says "Don't begin again" in an injured way, as if we were doing some sort of harm to the fine morning.

"I can assure you," said Bell seriously, "that she rules the parish with a rod of iron. She knows every farthing that every laborer makes in the week, and woe to him if he does not bring home a fair proportion to his wife! 'Well, Jackson,' she says, going into a cottage on her way home from church, 'I hear your master is going to give you fourteen shillings a week now.' 'Thank ye, ma'am,' he says, for he knows well who secured him that additional shilling to his wages. 'But I want you to give me threepence out of it for the savings bank; and your wife will gather up a sixpence a week until she gets enough for another pair of blankets for you, now the winter is coming on, you know.' Well, the poor man dares not object. He surrenders three-fourths of the shilling he had been secretly expecting to spend on beer, and does not say a word. The husbands in our parish have a bad time of it—"

"One of them has, at least," says that voice from behind.

"And you should see how our Tita will confront a huge hulking fellow who is half bemused with beer, and order him to be silent in her presence. 'How dare

you speak to your wife like that before me?"—and he is as quiet as a lamb. And sometimes the wives have a turn of it, too—not reproof, you know, but a fine affectation of surprise if they have not finished the sewing of the children's frocks which Tita and I have cut out for them, or if they have gone into the ale-house with their husbands late on the Saturday night, or if they have missed being at church next morning. Then you should see the farmers' boys playing pitch-and-toss in the road on the Sunday forenoons—how they skurry away like rabbits when they see her coming up from church: they fly behind stacks or plunge through hedges—anything to get out of her way."

"And I am not assisted, Count von Rosen, in any of these things," says my lady, "by a young lady who was once known to catch a small boy and shake him by the shoulders because he threw a stone at the clergyman as he passed."

"Then you do assist, mademoiselle," inquires the lieutenant, "in this overseeing of the parish?"

"Oh, I merely keep the books," replied Bell. "I am the treasurer of the savings bank, and I call a quarterly meeting to announce the purchase of various kinds of cotton and woolen stuffs at wholesale prices, and to hear from the subscribers what they most need. Then we have the materials cut into patterns, we pay so much to the women for sewing, and then we sell the things when they are made; so that the people pay for everything they get, and yet get it far cheaper than they would at a shop, while we are not out of pocket by it."

Here a deep groan is heard from the hind seat of the phaeton. That beautiful fiction about the ways and means of our local charities has existed in our household for many a day. The scheme is admirable. There is no pauperization of the peasantry around. The theory is that Queen Tita and Bell merely come in to save the cost of distribution, and that nothing is given away gratis except their charitable labor. It is a pretty theory. The folks round about us find it answer admirably. But somehow or

other—whether from an error in Bell's bookkeeping, or whether from a sudden rise in the price of flannel, or some other recondite and esoteric cause—all I know is, that the system demands an annual subvention from the head of the house. Of course my lady can explain all that away. There is some temporary defect in the working out of the scheme: the self-supporting character of it remains easy of demonstration. It may be so. But a good deal of bread, in the shape of cheques, has been thrown upon the waters in a certain district in England, while the true author of the charity, the real dispenser of these good things, is not considered in the matter, and is privately regarded as a sort of grudging person who does not understand the larger claims of humanity.

At length we have our first glimpse of Wales. From Ellesmere to Overton the road gradually ascends, until, just before you come to Overton, it skirts the edge of a high plateau, and all at once you are confronted by the sight of a great valley, through which a stream, brown as a Welsh rivulet, is slowly stealing. That narrow thread that twists through spacious woods and green meadows is the river Dee: far away beyond the valley that it waters rise the blue masses of Cyn-y-Brain and Cefn-y-Fedn, while to the south of the latter range lies the gap by which you enter the magic Vale of Llangollen. On this breezy morning there were white clouds blowing over the dusky peaks of the mountains, while ever and anon, from a blue rift overhead, a shimmering line of silver would strike down, and cause the side of some distant hill to shine in pale brown and gray and gold.

"That is a very strange sight to me," said the lieutenant as the horses stood in the road—"all these great mountains, with, I think, no houses on them. That is the wild country into which the first inhabitants of this country fled when the German tribes swarmed over here: all that we have been taught at school; but only think of the difficulty the Berlin boy, living with nothing but miles of flat sand around him, has to imagine a wild

region like this, which gave shelter because no one could follow into its forests and rocks. And how are we to go? We cannot drive into these mountains."

"Oh, but there are very fine roads in Wales," said Bell—"broad, smooth, well-made roads; and you can drive through the most beautiful scenery if you wish."

However, it was arranged we should not attempt anything of the kind, which would take us too far out of our route to Scotland. It was resolved to let the horses have a rest in Chester the next day, while we should take a run down by rail to Llanberis and Bettys-y-Coed, merely to give our Uhlan a notion of the difficulties he would have to encounter in subduing this country when the time came for that little expedition.

So we bowled through the little village of Overton, and down the winding road which plunges into the beautiful valley we had been regarding from the height. We had not yet struck the Dee, but it seemed as though the ordinary road down in this plain was a private path through a magnificent estate. As far as we could see a splendid avenue of elms stretched on in front of us, and while we drove through the cool shade on either side lay a spacious extent of park, studded with grand old oaks. At length we came upon the stream, flowing brown and clear down through picturesque and wooded banks, and then we got into open country again and ran pleasantly up to Wrexham.

Perhaps the lieutenant would have liked to bait the horses in some tiny village near to this beautiful stream. We should all have gone out for a saunter along the banks, and in the pulling of wild flowers, or the taking of sketches, or some such idyllic employment, the party would in all likelihood have got divided. It would have been a pleasant opportunity for him to ask this gentle English girl to be his wife, with the sweet influences of the holiday-time disposing her to consent, and with the quiet of this wooded valley ready to catch her smallest admission. Besides, who could tell what might happen after Bell had reached Chester? That was the next of the

large towns which Arthur had agreed to make points of communication. I think the lieutenant began at this time to look upon large towns as an abomination, to curse telegraphs and hate the penny post with a deadly hatred.

But in place of any such quiet resting-place we had to put up Castor and Pol-lux in the brisk little town of Wrexham, which was even more than usually busy with its market-day. The Wynnstay Arms was full of farmers, seed-agents, implement-makers, and what not, all roaring and talking to the last limit of their lungs—bustling about the place and calling for glasses of ale, or attacking huge joints of cold roast beef with an appetite which had evidently not been educated on nothing. The streets were filled with the venders of various wares; the wives and daughters of the farmers, having come in from the country in the dog-cart or wagonette, were promenading along the pavement in the most gorgeous hues known to silken and muslin fabrics; cattle were being driven through narrow thoroughfares; and the sellers of fruit and of fish in the marketplace alarming the air with their invitations. The only quiet corner, indeed, was the churchyard and the church, through which we wandered for a little while, but young folks are not so foolish as to tell secrets in a building that has an ominous echo.

Was there no chance for our unfortunate Uhlan?

"Hurry—hurry on to Chester!" cried Bell as we drove away from Wrexham, along the level northern road.

A gloomy silence had overtaken the lieutenant. He was now sitting behind with my lady, and she was doing her best to entertain him (there never was a woman who could make herself more agreeable to persons not of her own household), while he sat almost mute, listening respectfully, and half suffering himself to be interested.

Bell, on the other hand, was all delight at the prospect of reaching the quaint old city that evening, and was busy with wild visions of our plunge into Wales on the morrow.

"Please may I make a confession?" she asked at length.

"Why, yes."

I hoped, however, she was not going to follow the example of the lieutenant, and confide to me that she meditated making a proposal. Although men dislike this duty, they have a prejudice against seeing it undertaken by women.

"All our journey has wanted but one thing," said Bell. "We have had everything that could be wished—bright weather, a comfortable way of traveling, much amusement, plenty of fights: indeed there was nothing wanting but one thing, and that was the sea. Did you never try to look for it? Were you never anxious to see only a long thread of gray near the sky, and be quite sure that out there the woods stopped on the edge of a line of sand? I dared not tell Tita, for she would have thought me very ungrateful, but I may tell you, for you don't seem to care about anybody's opinions; but I used to get a little vexed with the constant meadows, rivers, farms, hills, woods, and all that over and over again, and the sea not coming any nearer. Of course one had no right to complain, as I suppose it's put down in the map and can't be altered, but we seem to have been a long time coming across the country to reach the sea."

"Why, you wild sea-gull, do you think that was our only object? A long time reaching the sea! As if our journey through the finest woodland scenery in England was a penance! Don't imagine your anxiety was concealed. I saw you perpetually scanning the horizon, as if one level line were better than other level lines at such a distance. You began it on Richmond Hill, and would have us believe the waves of the Irish Channel were breaking somewhere about Windsor."

"No, no, no!" pleaded Bell: "don't think me ungrateful. I think we have been most fortunate in coming as we did, and Count von Rosen must have seen every sort of English landscape—first the river-pictures about Richmond, then the wooded hills about Oxfordshire, then the plains of Berkshire, then the

mere-country about Ellesmere, and now he is going into the mountains of Wales. But all the same we shall reach the sea to-morrow, whether you like it or not, and I don't think you will be very sorry."

"What are you two fighting about?" says Queen Tita, interposing.

"We are not fighting," says Bell, in the meekest possible way—"we are not husband and wife."

"I wish you were," says the other, coolly.

"Madame," I observe at this point, "that is rather a dangerous jest to play with. It is now the second time you have made use of it this morning—"

"And if I do repeat old jokes," says Tita, with a certain calm audacity, "it must be through the force of a continual example."

"—And such jests sometimes fix themselves in the mind until they develop and grow into a serious purpose."

"Does that mean that you would like to marry Bell? If it can be done legally and properly, I should not be sorry, I know. Can it be done, Count von Rosen? Shall we four go back to London with different partners? An exchange of husbands—"

Merciful Powers! what was the woman saying? She suddenly stopped, and an awful consternation fell on the whole four of us. That poor little mite of a creature had been taking no thought of her words in her pursuit of this harmless jest, and somehow it had wandered into her brain that Bell and the lieutenant were on the same footing as herself and I. A more embarrassing slip of the tongue could not be conceived, and for several dreadful seconds no one had the courage to speak, until Bell, wildly and incoherently, with her face and forehead glowing like a rose, asked whether there was a theatre in Chester.

"No," cries my lady eagerly. "Don't ask us to go to the theatre to-night, Bell: let us go for a walk rather."

She positively did not know what she was saying. It was a wonder she did not propose we should go to the gardens of Cremorne or up in a balloon. Her

heart was filled with anguish and dismay over the horrible blunder she had made; and she began talking about Chester in a series of disconnected sentences, in which the heartrending effort to appear calm and unconstrained was painfully obvious. Much as I have had to bear at the hands of that gentle little woman, I felt sorry for her then. I wondered what she and Bell would say to each other when they went off for a private confabulation at night.

By the time that we drew near Chester, however, this unfortunate incident was pretty well forgotten, and we were sufficiently tranquil to regard with interest the old city, which was now marked out in the twilight by the yellow twinkling of the gas-lamps. People had come out for their evening stroll round the great wall which encircles the town. Down in the level meadows by the side of the Dee lads were still playing cricket. The twilight, indeed, was singularly clear, and when we had driven into the town and put up the phaeton at an enormous Gothic hotel which seemed to overawe the small old-fashioned houses in its neighborhood, we too set out for a leisurely walk round the ancient ramparts.

But here again the lieutenant was disappointed. How could he talk privately to Bell on this public promenade? Lovers there were there, but all in solitary pairs. If Tita had only known that she and I were interfering with the happiness of our young folks, she would have thrown herself headlong into the moat rather than continue this unwilling persecution. As it was, she went peacefully along, watching the purple light of the evening fall over the great landscape around the city. The ruddy glow in the windows became more and more pronounced. There were voices of boys still heard down in the race-course, but there was no more cricketing possible. In the still evening a hush seemed to fall over the town; and when we got round to the weir on the river the vague white masses of water that we could scarcely see sent the sound of them roaring and tumbling, as it were, into a hollow chamber. Then we plunged once more into

the streets. The shops were lit. The quaint galleries along the first floor of the houses, which are the special architectural glory of Chester, were duskily visible in the light of the lamps. And then we escaped into the yellow glare of the great dining-room of the Gothic hotel, and sat ourselves down for a comfortable evening.

"Well," I say to the lieutenant, as we go into the smoking-room when the women have retired for the night, "have you asked Bell yet?"

"No," he answers morosely.

"Then you have escaped another day?"

"It was not my intention. I will ask her whenever I get the chance: that I am resolved upon; and if she says No, why, it is my misfortune, that is all."

"I have told you she is certain to say No."

"Very well."

"But I have a proposal to make."

"So have I," says the lieutenant with a gloomy smile.

"To-morrow you are going down to see a bit of Wales. Why spoil the day prematurely? Put it off until the evening, and then take your refusal like a man. Don't do Wales an injustice."

"Why," says the lieutenant, peevishly, "you think nothing is important but looking at a fine country and enjoying yourself out of doors. I do not care what happens to a lot of mountains and rivers when this thing is for me far more important. When I can speak to mademoiselle, I will do so; and I do not care if all Wales is put under water to-morrow—"

"After your refusal the Deluge. Well, it is a good thing to be prepared. But you need not talk in an injured tone, which reminds one oddly of Arthur."

You should have seen the stare on the lieutenant's face.

"It is true. All you boys are alike when you fall in love—all unreasonable, discontented, perverse and generally objectionable. It was all very well for you to call attention to that unhappy young man's conduct when you were in your proper senses; but now, if you go

on as you are going, it will be the old story over again."

"Then you think I will persecute mademoiselle, and be insolent to her and her friends?"

"All in good time. Bell refuses you to-morrow. You are gloomy for a day. You ask yourself why she has done so. Then you come to us and beg for our interference. We tell you it is none of our business. You say we are prejudiced against you, and accuse us of forwarding Arthur's suit. Then you begin to look on him as your successful rival. You grow so furiously jealous—"

Here the Uhlan broke into a tremendous laugh. "My good friend, I have discovered a great secret," he cried. "Do you know who is jealous? You! You will oppose any one who tries to take mademoiselle away from you. And I—I will try—and *I will do it.*"

From the greatest despondency he had leaped to a sort of wild and crazy hope of success. He smiled to himself, walked about the room, and talked in the most buoyant and friendly manner about the prospects of the morrow. He blew clouds of cigar-smoke about as if he were Neptune getting to the surface of the sea, blowing back the sea-foam from about his face. And then, all at once, he sat down—we were the only occupants of the room—and said, in a hesitating way, "Look here! Do you think madame could speak a word to her if she does say No?"

"I thought it would come to that."

"You are—what do you call it?—very unsympathetic."

"Unsympathetic! No: I have a great interest in both of you. But the whole story is so old, one has got familiar with its manifestations."

"It is a very old and common thing to be born, but it is a very important thing, and it only happens to you once."

"And falling in love only happens to you once, I suppose?"

"Oh no, many times. I have very often been in love with this girl or the other girl, but never until this time serious. I never before asked any one to marry me; and surely this is serious,

that I offer for her sake to give up my country and my friends and my profession—everything. Surely that is serious enough."

And so it was. And I knew that if ever he got Bell to listen favorably to him, he would have little difficulty in convincing her that he had never cared for any one before, while she would easily assure him that she had always regarded Arthur only as a friend. For there are no lies so massive, audacious and unblushing as those told by two young folks when they recount to each other the history of their previous love-affairs.

CHAPTER XVII.

IN THE FAIRY GLEN.

O Queen I thou knowest I pray not for this:

Oh set us down together in some place

Where not a voice can break our heaven of bliss,

Where naught but rocks and I can see her face

Softening beneath the marvel of thy grace,

Where not a foot our vanished steps can track—

The golden age, the golden age come back!

LITTLE did our Bonny Bell reckon of the plot that had been laid against her peace of mind. She was as joyous as a wild sea-bird when we drew near the sea. All the morning she had hurried us on, and we were at the station some twenty minutes before the train started. Then she must needs sit on the northern side of the carriage, close in by the window; and all at once, when there flashed before us a long and level stretch of gray-green, she uttered a sharp, low cry of gladness, as though the last wish of her life had been realized.

Yet there was not much in this glimpse of the sea that we got as we ran slowly along the coast-line toward Llandudno. It was a quiet gray day, with here and there a patch of blue overhead. The sea was stirred only by a ripple. Here and there it darkened into a breezy green, but for the most part it reflected the cold gray sky overhead. The shores were flat. The tide was up, and not a rock to be seen. One or two small boats were visible, but no great, full-rigged ship, with all her white sails swelling before the wind, swept onward to the

low horizon. But it was the sea: that was enough for this mad girl of ours. She had the window put down, and a cold odor of sea-weed flew through the carriage. If there was not much blue outside, there was plenty in the deep and lambent color of her eyes, where pure joy and delight fought strangely with the half-saddening influences produced by this first unexpected meeting with the sea.

Turning abruptly off at Llandudno, with the gray walls of Conway Castle overlooking the long sweep of the estuary, we plunged down into the mountains. The dark masses of firs up among the rocks were deepening in gloom. There was an unearthly calm on the surface of the river, as if the reflection of the boulders and the birch bushes and the occasional cottages lay waiting for the first stirring of the rain. Then, far away up the cleft of the valley a gray mist came floating over the hills: it melted whole mountains into a soft dull gray: it blotched out dark green forests and mighty masses of rock, until a pattering against the carriage windows told us that the rain had begun.

"It is always so in Wales," said my lady with a sigh.

But when we got out at Bettys-y-Coed you would not have fancied our spirits were grievously oppressed. Indeed, I remarked that we never enjoyed ourselves so much, whether in the phaeton or out of it, as when there was abundant rain about, the desperation of the circumstances driving us into being recklessly merry. So we would not take the omnibus that was carrying up to the Swallow Falls some half dozen of those horrid creatures, the tourists. The deadly dislike we bore to these unoffending people was remarkable. What right had they to be invading this wonderful valley? What right had they to leave Bayswater and occupy seats at the *tables d'hôte* of hotels? We saw them drive away with a secret pleasure. We hoped they would get wet and swear never to return to Wales. We called them tourists, in short, which has become a term of opprobrium among Englishmen; but we

would have perished rather than admit for a moment that we too were tourists.

It did not rain very much. There was a strong resinous odor in the air, from the spruce and the larch and the pines and the breckans, as we got through the wood and ventured down the slippery paths which brought us in front of the Swallow Falls. There had been plenty of rain, and the foaming jets of water were darting among the rocks very much like the white glimmer of the martin as he cuts about the eaves of a house in the twilight. The roar of the river filled the air and joined in chorus the rustling of the trees in the wind. We could scarcely hear ourselves speak. It was not a time for confidences. We returned to Bettys.

But the lieutenant, driven wild by the impossibility of placing all his sorrows before Bell, eagerly assented to the proposal that we should go and see the Fairy Glen, a much more retired spot, after luncheon. The dexterity he displayed in hurrying over that meal was remarkable. It was rather a scramble, for a number of visitors were in the place, and the long table was pretty well filled up. But with a fine audacity our Uhlan constituted himself waiter for our party, and simply harried the hotel. If my lady's eyes only happened to wander toward a particular dish, it was before her in a twinkling. The lieutenant alarmed many a young lady there by first begging her pardon and then reaching over her shoulder to carry off some huge plate, although he presently atoned for these misdemeanors by carving a couple of fowls for the use of the whole company. He also made the acquaintance of a governess who was in charge of two tender little women of twelve and fourteen. He sat down by the governess, discovered that she had been at Bettys for some weeks, got from her some appalling statistics of the rain that had fallen: then, for the maids were rather remiss, went and got her a bottle of ale, which he drew for her and poured out and graciously handed to her. Bell was covertly laughing all the time: my lady was amazed.

"Now," he said, turning in quite a matter-of-fact way to us, "when do we start for this Fairy Glen?"

"Pray don't let us take you away from such charming companionship," observed my lady in an under tone.

"Oh, she is a very intelligent person," says the lieutenant—"really a very intelligent person. But she makes a great mistake in preferring Schiller's plays to Lessing's for her pupils. I tried to convince her of that. She is going to the Rhine with those young ladies—later on in the year to Königswinter. Would it not be a very nice thing for us all, when we leave the phaeton at your home, to go for a few weeks to Königswinter?"

"We cannot all flirt with a pretty governess," says Tita.

"Now that is too bad of you English ladies," retorts the lieutenant. "You must always think when a man talks to a girl he wants to be in love with her. No—it is absurd. She is intelligent, a good talker, she knows very many things, and she is a stranger like myself in a hotel. Why should I not talk to her?"

"You are quite right, Count von Rosen," says Bell.

Of course he was quite right: he was always quite right. But wait a bit.

We set off for the Fairy Glen. The rain had ceased, but the broad and smooth roads were yellow with water, large drops still fell from the trees, and the air was humid and warm. The lieutenant lit a cigar about as big as a wooden leg, and Bell insisted on us two falling rather behind, because that she liked the scent of a cigar in the open air.

We crossed the well-known Waterloo Bridge—built in the same year as that which chronicled the great battle—and we heard the lieutenant relating to Tita how several of his relatives had been in the army which came up to help us on that day.

"You know we had won before you came up," said my lady stoutly.

The lieutenant laughed. "I am not sure about that," he said; "but you did what we could not have done—you held the whole French army by yourselves,

and crippled it so that our mere appearance on the battle-field was enough."

"I think it was very mean of both of you," said Bell, "to win a battle by mere force of numbers. If you had given Napoleon a chance—"

"Mademoiselle," said Von Rosen, "the object of a campaign is to win battles—anyhow. You throw away the heroic elements of the old single combatants when it is with armies that you fight, and you take all advantages you can get. But who was the braver then—your small English army, or the big French one that lost the whole day without overwhelming their enemy, and waited until we came down to drive them back? That is a very good word, a very strong word—our *zurückgeworfen*. It is a very good thing to see that word at the end of a sentence that talks of your enemies."

At length we got to the neighborhood of the Fairy Glen, and found ourselves in among the wet trees, with the roar of the stream reverberating through the woods. There were a great many paths in this pretty ravine. You can go close down to the water, and find still pools reflecting the silver-lichened rocks, or you can clamber along the high banks through the birch and hazel and elm, and look down on the white waterfalls beneath you that wet the ferns and bushes about with their spray. Four people need not stay together. Perhaps it was because of an extraordinary change in the aspect of the day that Tita and I lost sight of the young folks. Indeed, we had sat down upon a great smooth boulder and were pensively enjoying the sweet scents around and the plashing of the stream, when this strange thing occurred, so that we never remembered that our companions had gone. Suddenly into the gloomy gray day there leaped a wild glow of yellow fire, and far up the narrowing vista of the glen, where the rocks grew closer together, the sunlight smote down on the gleaming green of the underwood until it shone and sparkled over the smooth pools. The light came nearer. There was still a sort of mist or dampness in the atmosphere, hanging about the woods, and

dulling the rich colors of the glen, but as the sunlight came straggling down the rocky ravine, a dash of blue gleamed out overhead, and a rush of wind through the dripping green branches seemed to say that the wet was being swept off the mountains and toward the sea. The Fairy Glen was now a blaze of transparent green and fine gold, with white diamonds of raindrops glittering on the ferns and moss and bushes. It grew warm, too, down in the hollow, and the sweet odors of the forest above—wood-ruff, and campion, and wild mint, and the decayed leaves of the great St. John's wort—all stole out into the moist air.

"Where have they gone?" says Tita almost sharply.

"My dear," I say to her, "you were young yourself once. It's a good time ago, but still—"

"Bell never asked for letters this morning," remarks my lady, showing the direction her thoughts were taking.

"No matter: Arthur will be meeting us directly. He is sure to come over to our route in his dog-cart."

"We must find them and get back to Bettys-y-Coed," is the only reply which is vouchsafed me.

They were not far to seek. When we had clambered up the steep bank to the path overhead, Bell and the lieutenant were standing in the road, silent. As soon as they saw us they came slowly walking down. Neither spoke a word. Somehow, Bell managed to attach herself to Tita, and the two then went on ahead.

"You were right," said the lieutenant in a low voice, very different from his ordinary light and careless fashion.

"You have asked her, then?"

"Ycs."

"And she refused?"

"Yes."

"I thought she would."

"Now," he said, "I suppose I ought to go back to London."

"Why?"

"It will not be pleasant for her, my being here. It will be very embarrassing to both of us."

"Nonsense! She will look on it as a joke."

I am afraid our Uhlan looked rather savage at this moment.

"Don't you see," I observed to him seriously, "that if you go away in this manner you will give the affair a tremendous importance, and make all sorts of explanations necessary? Why not school yourself to meeting her on ordinary terms, and take it that your question was a sort of preliminary sounding, as it were, without prejudice to either?"

"Then you think I should ask her again at some future time?" he said eagerly.

"I don't think anything of the kind."

"Then why should I remain here?"

"I hope you did not come with us merely for the purpose of proposing to Bell?"

"No: that is true enough, but our relations are now all altered. I do not know what to do."

"Don't do anything: greet her as if nothing of the kind had occurred. A sensible girl like her will think more highly of you in doing that than in doing some wild and mad thing, which will only have the effect of annoying her and yourself. Did she give you any reason?"

"I do not know," said Von Rosen disconsolately. "I am not sure what I said. Perhaps I did not explain enough. Perhaps she thought me blunt, rude, coarse in asking her so suddenly. It was all a sort of fire for a minute or two, and then the cold water came; and that lasts."

The two women were now far ahead: surely they were walking fast that Bell might have an opportunity of confiding all her perplexities to her friend.

"I suppose," said Von Rosen, "that I suffer for my own folly. I might have known. But for this day or two back it has seemed so great a chance to me—of getting her to promise at least to think of it; and the prospect of having such a wife as that, it was all too much. Perhaps I have done the worst for myself by the hurry, but was it not excusable

in a man to be in a hurry to ask such a girl to be his wife? And there is no harm in knowing soon that all that was impossible."

Doubtless it was comforting to him to go on talking. I wondered what Bell was saying at this moment, and whether a comparison of their respective views would throw some light on the subject. As for the lieutenant, he seemed to regard Bell's decision as final. If he had been a little older he might not, but having just been plunged from the pinnacle of hope into an abyss of despair, he was too stunned to think of clambering up again by degrees.

But even at this time all his thoughts were directed to the best means of making his presence as little of an embarrassment to Bell as possible.

"This evening will pass away very well," he said, "for everybody will be talking at dinner, and we need not to address each other; but to-morrow—if you think this better that I remain with you—then you will drive the phaeton, and you will give mademoiselle the front seat for the whole day. Is it agreed?"

"Certainly. You must not think of leaving us at present. You see, if you went away we should have to send for Arthur."

A sort of flame blazed up into the face of the lieutenant, and he said, in a rapid and vehement way, "This thing I will say to you—if mademoiselle will not marry me, good: it is the right of every girl to have her choice. But if you allow her to marry that wretched fellow, it will be a shame, and you will not forgive yourself, either madame or you, in the years afterward: that I am quite sure of."

"But what have we to do with Bell's choice of a husband?"

"You talked just now of sending for him to join your party."

"Why, Bell isn't bound to marry every one who comes for a drive with us. Your own case is one in point."

"But this is quite different. This pitiful fellow thinks he has an old right to her, as being an old friend and all that stupid nonsense; and I know that she

has a strange idea that she owes to him—" The lieutenant suddenly stopped. "No," he said, "I will not tell you what she did tell to me this afternoon. But I think you know it all; and it will be very bad of you to make a sacrifice of her by bringing him here—"

"If you remain in the phaeton, we can't."

"Then I will remain."

"Thank you! As Tita and I have to consider ourselves just a little bit amid all this whirl of love-making and reckless generosity, I must say we prefer your society to that of Master Arthur."

"That is a very good compliment," says Von Rosen with an ungracious sneer, for who ever heard of a young man of twenty-six being just to a young man of twenty-two when both wanted to marry the same young lady?

We overtook our companions. Bell and I walked on together to the hotel, and subsequently down to the station. An air of gloom seemed to hang over the heavy forests far up amid the gray rocks. The river had a mournful sound as it came rushing down between the mighty boulders. Bell scarcely uttered a word as we got into the carriage and slowly steamed away from the platform.

Whither had gone the joy of her face? She was once more approaching the sea. Under ordinary circumstances you would have seen an anticipatory light in her blue eyes, as if she already heard the long splash of the waves and smelt the seaweed. Now she sat in a corner of the carriage; and when at last we came in view of the most beautiful sight that we had yet met on our journey, she sat and gazed at it with the eyes of one distraught.

That was a rare and wild picture we saw when we got back to the sea. The heavy rain-clouds had sunk down until they formed a low dense wall of purple all along the line of the western horizon between the sea and the sky. That heavy bar of cloud was almost black, but just above it there was a calm fair stretch of lambent green, with here and there a torn shred of crimson cloud and one or two lines of sharp gold, lying

parallel with the horizon. But away over in the east again were some windy masses of cloud that had caught a blush of red, and these had sent a pale reflection down on the sea—a sort of salmon-color that seemed the complement of the still gold-green overhead.

The sunset touched faintly the low mountains about the mouth of the Dee. A rose-red glimmer struck the glass of the window at which Bell sat; and then, as the train made a slight curve in the line running by the shore, the warm light entered and lit up her face with a rich and beautiful glow. The lieutenant, hidden in the dusk of the opposite corner, was regarding her with wistful eyes. Perhaps he thought that now, more than ever, she looked like some celestial being far out of his reach, whom he had dared to hope would forsake her strange altitudes and share his life with him. Tita, saying nothing, was also gazing out of the window, and probably pondering on the unhappy climax that seemed to put an end to her friendly hopes.

Darkness fell over the sea and the land. The great plain of water seemed to fade away into the gloom of the horizon, but here, close at hand, the pools on the shore occasionally caught the last reflection of the sky, and flashed out a gleam of yellow fire. The wild intensity of the colors was almost painful to the eyes: the dark blue-green of the shore-plants and the sea-grass; the gathering purple of the sea; the black rocks on the sand; and then that sudden bewildering flash of gold where a pool had been left among the seaweed. The mountains in the south had now disappeared, and were doubtless, away in that mysterious darkness, wreathing themselves in the cold night-mists that were slowly rising from the woods and the valleys of the streams.

Such was our one and only glimpse of Wales, and the day that Bell had looked forward to with such eager delight had closed in silence and despair.

When we got back to the hotel, a letter from Arthur was lying on the table.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE COLLAPSE.

Thy crowded ports,
Where rising masts an endless prospect yield,
With labor burn, and echo to the shouts
Of hurried sailor as he hearty waves
His last adieu, and, loosening every sheet,
Resigns the spreading vessel to the wind.

THE following correspondence has been handed to us for publication:

“COWLEY HOUSE, TWICKENHAM, July —, 1871.

“MON CHER MAMMA,—DOCTOR Ashburton dire me que je écris a vous dans Fransais je sais Fransais un petit et ici est un letter a vous dans Fransais mon cher Mamma le pony est trai bien et je sui mon cher Mamma.

“Voter amié fils,

“TOM.”

“COWLEY HOUSE, TWICKENHAM, July —, 1871.

“MY DEAR PAPA,—Tom as written Mamma a letter in French and Doctor Ashburton says I must Begin to learn French too but Tom says it is very difficult and it takes a long time to write a Letter with the dixonary and he says my dear Papa that we must learn German Too but please may I learn German first and you will give my love to the German gentleman who gave us the pony he is very well my dear Papa and very fat and round and hard in the sides Harry French says if he goes on eting like that he will burst but me and Tom only laughed at him and we rode him down to Stanes and back which is a long way and I only tumbled off twice but once into the ditch for he wanted to eat the Grass and I Pooled at him and slipt over is head but I was not much Wet and I went to bed until Jane dried all my close and no one new of it but her Pleese my dear papa how is Auntie Bell, and we send our love to her, and to my dear mamma and I am your affexnate son,

“JACK.

“P. S. All the monney you sent as gone away for oats and beans and hay Pleese my dear Papa to send a good lot more.”

“—INN, OAKHAM, Friday Afternoon.

“ . . . You will see I have slightly departed from the route I described in a telegram to Bell. Indeed, I find my-

self so untrammelled in driving this light dog-cart, with a powerful little animal that never seems fatigued, that I can go anywhere without fearing there will not be accommodation for a pair of horses and a large party. I am sure you must often have been put to straits in securing rooms for so many at a small country inn. Probably you know the horse I have got: it is the cob that Major Quinet bought from Heathcote. I saw him by the merest accident when I returned from Worcester to London—told him what I meant to do: he offered me the cob with the greatest good-nature, and as I knew I should be safer with it than anything I could hire, I accepted. You will see I have come a good pace. I started on the Tuesday morning after I saw you at Worcester, and here I am at Oakham, rather over ninety miles. Tomorrow I hope to be in Nottingham, about other thirty. Perhaps, if you will allow me, I may strike across country, by Huddersfield and Skipton, and pay you a visit at Kendal. I hope Bell is well, and that you are not having much rain. I have had the most delightful weather.

"Yours sincerely,

"ARTHUR ASHBURTON."

"It is a race," said the lieutenant, "who shall be at Carlisle first."

"Arthur will beat," remarked Bell, looking to my lady; and although nothing could have been more innocent than that observation, it seemed rather to take Von Rosen down a bit. He turned to the window and looked out.

"I think it was very foolish of Major Quinet to lend him that beautiful little bay cob to go on such an expedition as that," said Tita. "He will ruin it entirely. Fancy going thirty miles a day without giving the poor animal a day's rest! Why should he be so anxious to overtake us? If we had particularly wanted him to accompany us, we should have asked him to do so."

"He does not propose to accompany you," I say. "He is only coming to pay you a visit."

"I know what that means," says my

lady with a tiny shrug—"something like the arrival of a mother-in-law, with a carriage full of luggage."

"My dear," I say to her, "why should you speak scornfully of the amiable and excellent lady who is responsible for your bringing up?"

"I was not speaking of my mamma," says Tita, "but of the abstract mother-in-law."

"A man never objects to an abstract mother-in-law. Now, your mamma—although she is not to be considered as a mother-in-law—"

"My mamma never visits me but at my own request," says my lady, with something of loftiness in her manner; "and I am sorry she makes her visits so short, for when *she* is in the house I am treated with some show of attention and respect."

"Well," I say to her, "if a mother-in-law can do no better than encourage hypocrisy— But I bear no malice. I will take some sugar, if you please."

"And as for Arthur," continues Tita, turning to Bell, "what must I say to him?"

"Only that we shall be pleased to see him, I suppose," is the reply.

The lieutenant stares out into the streets of Chester as though he did not hear.

"We cannot ask him to go with us: it would look too absurd, a dog-cart trotting after us all the way!"

"He might be in front," says Bell, "if the cob is so good a little animal as he says."

"I wonder how Major Quinet could have been so stupid?" says Tita with a sort of suppressed vexation.

The reader may remember that a few days ago Major Quinet was a white-souled angel of a man, to whom my lady had given one of those formal specifications of character which she has always at hand when any one is attacked. Well, one of the party humbly recalls that circumstance. He asks in what way Major Quinet has changed within the past two days. Tita looks up with that sort of quick, triumphant glance which tells beforehand that she has a

reply ready, and says, "If Major Quinet has committed a fault, it is one of generosity. That is an error not common among men—especially men who have horses, and who would rather see their own wives walk through the mud to the station than let their horses get wet."

"Bell, what is good for you when you're sat upon?"

"Patience," says Bell; and then we go out into the old and gray streets of Chester.

It was curious to notice now the demeanor of our hapless lieutenant toward Bell. He had had a whole night to think over his position, and in the morning he seemed to have for the first time fully realized the hopelessness of his case. He spoke of it, before the women came down, in a grave, matter-of-fact way, not making any protestations of suffering, but calmly accepting it as a matter for regret. One could easily see, however, that a good deal of genuine feeling lay behind these brief words.

Then when Bell came down he showed her a vast amount of studied respect, but spoke to her of one or two ordinary matters in a careless tone, as if to assure everybody that nothing particular had happened. The girl herself was not equal to any such effort of amiable hypocrisy. She was very timid. She agreed with him in a hurried way whenever he made the most insignificant statement, and showed herself obtrusively anxious to take his side when my lady, for example, doubted the efficacy of carbolic soap. The lieutenant had no great interest in carbolic soap—had never seen it, indeed, until that morning—but Bell was so anxious to be kind to him that she defended the compound as if she had been the inventor and patentee of it.

"It is very awkward for me," said the lieutenant as we were strolling through the quaint thoroughfare, Bell and my lady leading the way along the piazzas formed on the first floor of the houses—"it is very awkward for me to be always meeting her, and more especially in a room. And she seems to think that she has done me some wrong. That is not so. That is quite a mistake. It is a

misfortune, that is all; and the fault is mine that I did not understand sooner. Yet I wish we were again in the phaeton. Then there is great life, motion—something to do and think about. I cannot bear this doing of nothing."

Well, if the lieutenant's restlessness was to be appeased by hard work, he was likely to have enough of it that day, for we were shortly to take the horses and phaeton across the estuary of the Mersey by one of the Birkenhead ferries, and any one who has engaged in that pleasing operation knows the excitement of it. Von Rosen chafed against the placid monotony of the Chester streets. The passages under the porticoes are found to be rather narrow of a forenoon, when a crowd of women and girls have come out to look at the shops, and when the only alternative to waiting one's turn and getting along is to descend ignominiously into the thoroughfare below. Now, no stranger who comes to Chester would think of walking along an ordinary pavement so long as he can pace through those quaint old galleries that are built on the roofs of the ground-row of shops and cellars. The lieutenant hung aimlessly about, just as you may see a husband lounging and staring in Regent street while his wife is examining with a deadly interest the milliners' and jewelers' windows. Bell bought presents for the boys: my lady purchased photographs. In fact, we conducted ourselves like the honest Briton abroad, who buys a lot of useless articles in every town he comes to, chiefly because he has nothing else to do, and may as well seize that opportunity of talking to the natives.

Then our bonny bays were put into the phaeton, and, with a great sense of freedom shining on the face of our Ullan, we started once more for the north. Bell was sitting beside me. That had been part of the arrangement. But why was she so pensive? Why this profession of tenderness and an extreme interest and kindness? I had done her no injury.

"Bell," I say to her, "have you left all your wildness behind you—buried down at the foot of Box Hill or calmly interred under a block of stone up on

Mickleham Downs? Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set my lady frowning at you as if you were an incorrigible Tom-boy? Come now, touching that ballad of the Bailiff's Daughter, the guitar has not been out for a long time—"

A small gloved hand was gently and furtively laid on my arm. There was to be no singing. "I think," said Bell aloud, "that this is a very pretty piece of country to lie between two such big towns as Chester and Liverpool."

The remark was not very profound, but it was accurate, and it served its purpose of pushing away finally that suggestion about the guitar. We were now driving up the long neck of land lying between the parallel estuaries of the Dee and the Mersey. About Bachford, and on by Great Sutton and Childer Thornton to Eastham, the drive was pleasant enough, the windy day and passing clouds giving motion and variety to the undulating pasture-land and the level fields of the farms. But as we drove carelessly through the green landscape, all of a sudden we saw before us a great forest of masts, gray streaks in the midst of the horizon, and behind them a cloud of smoke arising from an immense stretch of houses. We discovered, too, the line of the Mersey; and by and by we could see its banks widening, until the boats in the bed of the stream could be vaguely made out in the distance.

"Shall we remain in Liverpool this evening?" asks Bell.

"As you please."

Bell had been more eager than any of us to hurry on our passage to the north, that we should have abundant leisure in the Lake country. But a young lady who finds herself in an embarrassing position may imagine that the best refuge she can have in the evening is the theatre.

"Pray don't," says Tita. "We shall be at Liverpool presently, and it would be a great pity to throw away a day, when we shall want all the spare time we can get when we reach Kendal."

Kendal! It was the town at which

Arthur was to meet us. But of course my lady had her way. Since Von Rosen chose to sit mute, the decision rested with her; and so the driver, being of an equable disposition, and valuing the peace of mind of the party far above the respect that ought to have been shown to Liverpool, meekly took his orders and sent the horses on.

But it was a long way to Liverpool, despite Tita's assurances. The appearances of the landscape were deceitful. The smoke on the other side of the river seemed to indicate that the city was close at hand, but we continued to roll along the level road without apparently coming one whit nearer Birkenhead. We crossed Bromborough Pool; we went by Primrose Hill; we drove past the grounds apparently surrounding some mansion, only to find the level road still stretching on before us. Then there were a few cottages. Houses of an unmistakably civic look began to appear. Suburban villas with gardens walled in with brick studded the roadside. Factories glimmered gray in the distance, an odor of coal-smoke was perceptible in the air; and finally, with a doleful satisfaction, we had the wheels of the phaeton rattling over a grimy street, and we knew we were in Birkenhead.

There was some excuse for the lieutenant losing his temper, even if he had not been in rather a gloomy mood to begin with. The arrangements for the transference of carriage-horses across the Mersey are of a nebulous description. When we drove down the narrow passage to Tranmere Ferry, the only official we could secure was a hulking lout of a fellow of decidedly hang-dog aspect. Von Rosen asked him, civilly enough, if there was any one about who could take the horses out of their harness and superintend the placing of them and the phaeton on the ferry. There was no such person. Our friend in moleskin hinted in a surly fashion that the lieutenant might do it for himself. But he would help, he said, and therewith he growled something about being paid for his trouble. I began to

fear for the safety of that man. The river is deep just close by.

Bell and Tita had to be got out, and tickets taken for the party and for the horses and phaeton. When I returned, the lieutenant, with rather a firm-set mouth, was himself taking the horses out, while the loafer in moleskin stood at some little distance, scowling and muttering scornful observations at the same time.

"Ha! have you got the tickets?" said our Uhlán. "That is very good. We shall do by ourselves. Can you get out the nose-bags, that we shall pacify them on going across? I have told this fellow, if he comes near to the horses, if he speaks one more word to me, he will be in the river the next moment; and that is quite sure as I am alive."

But there was no one who could keep the horses quiet like Bell. When they were taken down the little pier she walked by their heads and spoke to them and stroked their noses; and then she swiftly got on board the steamer to receive them. The lieutenant took hold of Pollux. The animal had been quiet enough, even with the steamer blowing and puffing in front of him, but when he found his hoofs striking on the board between the pier and the steamer he threw up his head and strove to back. The lieutenant held on by both hands. The horse went back another step. It was a perilous moment, for there is no railing to the board which forms the gangway to those ferry-steamers, and if the animal had gone to one side or the other, he and Von Rosen would have been in the water together. But with a "Hi! hoop!" from the lieutenant, and a little touch of a whip from behind, the horse sprang forward, and was in the boat before he knew. And there was Bell at his head, talking in an endearing fashion to him as the lieutenant pulled the cords of the nose-bag up; and one horse was safe.

There was less to do with Castor, that prudent animal, with his eyes staring wildly around, feeling his way gingerly on the sounding board, but not pausing aíl the same. He too had his nose-bag

slung round his ears, and when the steamer uttered a yell of a whistle through its steam-pipe, the two horses only started and knocked their hoofs about on the deck, for they were very well employed, and Bell was standing in front of their heads talking to them and pacifying them.

Then we steamed slowly out into the broad estuary. A strong wind was blowing up channel, and the yellow-brown waves were splashing about, with here and there a bold dash of blue on them from the gusty sky overhead. Far away down the Mersey the shipping seemed to be like a cloud along the two shores, and out on the wide surface of the river were large vessels being tugged about, and mighty steamers coming up to the Liverpool piers. When one of these bore down upon us so closely that she seemed to overlook our little boat, the two horses forgot their corn and flung their heads about a bit; but the lieutenant had a firm grip of them, and they were eventually quieted.

He had by this time recovered from his bit of wrath. Indeed, he laughed heartily over the matter, and said, "I am afraid I did give that lounging fellow a great fright. He does not understand German, I suppose, but the sound of what I said to him had a great effect upon him, I can assure you of that. He retreated from me hastily. It was some time before he could make out what had happened to him, and then he did not return to the phaeton."

The horses bore the landing on the other side very well, and with but an occasional tremulous start permitted themselves to be harnessed on the quay amid the roar and confusion of arriving and departing steamers. We were greatly helped in this matter by an amiable policeman, who will some day, I hope, become colonel and superintendent of the metropolitan force.

Werther, amid all this turmoil, was beginning to forget his sorrows. We had a busy time of it. He and Bell had been so occupied with the horses in getting them over that they had talked almost frankly to each other; and now

there occurred some continuation of the excitement in the difficulties that beset us. For after we had driven into the crowded streets we found that the large hotels in Liverpool have no mews attached to them, and in our endeavors to secure in one place entertainment for both man and beast some considerable portion of our time was consumed. At length we had to take the phaeton to the stables of a vet. in Hatton Garden, and then we were thrown on the wide world of Liverpool to look after our own sustenance.

"Mademoiselle," said the lieutenant, rather avoiding the direct look of her eyes, however, "if you would prefer to wait, and go to a theatre to-night—"

"Oh no, thank you," said Bell, quite hurriedly, as if she were anxious not to have her own wishes consulted: "I would much rather go on as far as we can to-day."

The lieutenant said nothing: how could he? He was but six-and-twenty, or thereabouts, and had not yet discovered a key to the Rosamond's maze of a woman's wishes.

So we went to a restaurant fronting a dull square, and dined. We were the only guests. Perhaps it was luncheon, perhaps it was dinner: we had pretty well forgotten the difference by this time, and were satisfied if we could get something to eat, anywhere, thrice a day.

But it was only too apparent that the pleasant relations with which we had started had been seriously altered. There was a distressing politeness prevailing throughout this repast, and Bell had so far forgotten her ancient ways as to become quite timid and nervously formal in her talk. As for my lady, she forgot to say sharp things. Indeed, she never does care for a good brisk quarrel unless there are people present ready to enjoy the spectacle. Fighting for the mere sake of fighting is a blunder, but fighting in the presence of a circle of noble dames and knights becomes a courtly tournament. All our old amusements were departing: we were like four people met in a London drawing-room, and of course we had not bargained for

this sort of thing on setting out. It had all arisen from Bell's excessive tenderness of heart. She had possessed herself with some wild idea that she had cruelly wronged our lieutenant. She strove to make up for this imaginary injury by a show of courtesy and kindness that was embarrassing to the whole of us. The fact is, the girl had never been trained in the accomplishments of city life. She regarded a proposal of marriage as something of consequence. There was a defect, too, about her pulsation: her heart, that ought to have gone regularly through the multiplication table in the course of its beating, and never changed from twice one to twelve times twelve, made frantic plunges here and there, and slurred over whole columns of figures in order to send an anxious and tender flush up to her forehead and face. A girl who was so little mistress of herself that—on a winter's evening, when we happened to talk of the summer-time and of half-forgotten walks near Ambleside and Coniston—tears might suddenly be seen to well up in her blue eyes, was scarcely fit to take her place in a modern drawing-room. At this present moment her anxiety and a sort of odd self-accusation were really spoiling our holiday, but we did not bear her much malice.

It was on this evening that we were destined to make our first acquaintance with the alarming method of making roads which prevails between Liverpool and Preston. It is hard to say by what process of fiendish ingenuity these petrified sweetbreads have been placed so as to occasion the greatest possible trouble to horses' hoofs, to wheels and to human ears; and it is just as hard to say why such roads—although they may wear long in the neighborhood of a city inviting constant traffic—should be continued out into country districts where a cart is met with about once in every five miles. These roads do not conduce to talking. One thinks of the unfortunate horses and of the effect on springs and wheels. Especially in the quiet of a summer evening the frightful rumbling over the wedged-in stones seems strange-

ly discordant. And yet when one gets clear of the suburban slums and the smoke of Liverpool a very respectable appearance of real country life becomes visible. When you get out to Walton Nurseries and on toward Aintree Station and Maghull, the landscape looks fairly green and the grass is of a nature to support animal life. There is nothing very striking in the scenery, it is true. Even the consciousness that away beyond the flats on the left the sea is washing over the great sand-banks and on to the level shore does not help much, for who can pretend to hear the whispering of the far-off tide amid the monotonous rattling over these abominable Lancashire stones? We kept our teeth well shut and went on. We crossed the small river of Alt. We whisked through Maghull village. The twilight was gathering fast as we got on to Aughton, and in the dusk, lit up by the yellow stars of the street-lamps, we drove into Ormskirk. The sun had gone down red in the west: we were again assured as to the morrow.

But what was the good of another bright morning to this melancholy Uhlán? Misfortune seemed to have marked us for its own. We drove into the yard of what was apparently the biggest inn in the place, and while the women were sent down to the inn, the lieutenant and I happened to remain a little while to look after the horses. Imagine our astonishment, therefore (after the animals had been taken out and our luggage uncarted), to find there was no accommodation for us inside the building.

"Maison maudite!" growled the lieutenant; "tu m'as trahi!"

So there was nothing for it but to leave the phaeton where it was and issue forth in quest of a house in which to hide our heads. It was an odd place when we found it. A group of women regarded us with a frightened stare. In vain we invited them to speak. At length another woman, little less alarmed than the others, apparently, made her appearance, and signified that we might, if we chose, go into a small parlor, smelling consumedly of gin and coarse to-

bacco. After all, we found the place was not so bad as it looked. Another chamber was prepared for us. Our luggage was brought round. Ham and beer were provided for our final meal, with some tea in a shaky tea-pot. There was nothing romantic in this dingy hostelry or in this stingy little town, but were we not about to reach a more favored country—the beautiful and enchanted land of which Bell had been dreaming so long?—

Kennst du es wohl? Dahin, dahin,
Möcht' ich mit dir, O mein Geliebter, ziehn!

[*Note by Queen Titania.*—I confess that I cannot understand these young people. On our way from the Fairy Glen back to Bettys-y-Coed, Bell told me something of what had occurred, but I really could not get from her any *proper* reason for her having acted so. She was much distressed, of course. I forbore to press her, lest we should have a *scene*, and I would not hurt the girl's feelings for the world, for she is as dear to me as one of my own children. But she could give no explanation. If she had said that Count von Rosen had been too precipitate, I could have understood it; and the probability, in any case, is that, with the ordinary want of tact that *seems* to prevail among men, he chose the very worst time. She said she had known him a very short time, and that she could not judge of a proposition coming so unexpectedly; and that she could not consent to his leaving his country and his profession for her sake. These are only such objections as every girl uses when she *really means* that she does not wish to marry. I asked her why. She had no objection to urge against Lieutenant von Rosen personally — as *how* could she? — for he is a most gentlemanly young man, with abilities and accomplishments considerably above the average. Perhaps, living down in the country for the greater part of the year, I am not competent to judge, but I know at least he compares *favorably* with the gentlemen whom I am in the habit of seeing. I asked her if she meant to marry Arthur. She would not answer.

She said something about his being an old friend—as if that had *anything in the world to do with it*. At first I thought that she had merely said No for the pleasure of accepting afterward; and I knew that in that case the lieutenant, who is a shrewd young man and has plenty of courage, would soon *make another trial*. But I was amazed to find so much of seriousness in her decision; and yet she will not say that she means to marry Arthur. Perhaps she is waiting to have an explanation with him first. In that case, I fear Count von Rosen's chances are but very small indeed, for I know how Arthur has *wantonly* traded on Bell's *great generosity* before. Perhaps I may be mistaken, but she would not admit that her decision

could be altered. I must say it is *most unfortunate*. Just as we were getting on so nicely and enjoying ourselves so much, and just as we were getting near to the Lake country that Bell so much delights in, everything is spoiled by this unhappy event, for which Bell can give no *adequate reason* whatever. It is a great pity that one who shall be nameless, but who looks pretty fairly after his own comfort, did not *absolutely forbid* Arthur to come vexing us in this way by driving over to our route. If Dr. Ashburton had had any proper control over the boy, he would have kept him to his studies in the Temple, instead of allowing him to risk the breaking of his neck in a dog-cart.]



PART VII.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE WHITE OWLS OF GARSTANG.

As she fled fast through sun and shade,
The happy winds upon her played,
Blowing the ringlet from the braid :
She looked so lovely, as she swayed
The rein with dainty finger-tips,
A man had given all other bliss,
And all his worldly wealth for this,
To waste his whole heart in one kiss
Upon her perfect lips.

THIS state of affairs could not last. "Look here," I say to Queen Titania, "we must cut the lieutenant adrift."
"As you please," she remarks, with a sudden coldness coming over her manner.

"Why should we be embarrassed by the freaks of these two young creatures? All the sunshine has gone out of the party since Bell has begun to sit mute and constrained, her only wish apparently being to show a superhuman courtesy to this perplexing young Prussian."

"You very quickly throw over any one who interferes with your own comfort," says my lady calmly.

"I miss my morning ballad. When one reaches a certain age, one expects to be studied and tended—except by one's wife."

"Well," says Tita, driven to desperation by this picture of the effect of Von Rosen's departure, "I warned you at our setting-out that these two would fall in love with each other and cause us a great deal of trouble."

Who can say that this little woman is wanting in courage? The audacity with which she made this statement was marvellous. She never flinched, and the brown, clear, dark eyes looked as bravely unconscious as if she had been announcing her faith in the multiplication table. There was no use in arguing the point. How could you seek to thwart or influence the firm belief that shone clearly and steadily in those tell-tale eyes?

"Come," I say to her, "is Von Rosen

to go, or is he to hang on in the hope of altering Bell's decision? I think the young man would himself prefer to leave us: I don't think he is in a comfortable position."

My lady appeared a trifle embarrassed. Was there some dark secret between these two women?

"A young man," she says, with a little hesitation, "is the best judge of his own chances. I have asked Bell; and I really can't quite make her out. Still, you know, a girl sometimes is in a manner frightened into saying 'No' the first time she is asked; and there might be—" She stopped.

"You think the lieutenant should ask her again?"

"No, I don't," says Tita hastily, "but it is impossible to say—she had nothing to urge against Count von Rosen—only that Arthur would consider himself unjustly treated—"

"So-ho! Is that the reason?"

"No, no, no!" cries the small woman in an agony of fright. "Don't you go and put any wrong notions into the young man's head—"

"Madam," I say to her, "recollect yourself. So far from wishing to interfere in the affairs of these two young people, I should like to bundle them both back to London, that we might continue our journey in peace. As for the lieutenant's again proposing to marry Bell, I consider that a man who twice asks a woman to become his wife forgets the dignity of his sex."

My lady looks up with the most beautifully innocent smile in her eyes, and says sweetly, "You did yourself."

"That was different."

"Yes, I dare say."

"I knew your heart would have broken if I hadn't."

"Oh!" she says, with her eyes grown appalled.

"In fact, it was my native generosity

that prompted me to ask you a second time, for I perceived that you were about to ask me."

"How many more?" she asks, but I cannot make out what mysterious things she is secretly counting up. "But no matter. There is little use in recalling these bygone mistakes. Justice is satisfied when a fool repents him of his folly."

At this moment Bell enters the room. She goes up to Tita and takes both her hands: "You are laughing in a vexed way. You must have been quarreling. What shall we do to him?"

"The falling out of faithful friends is generally made up with a kiss, Bell," it is remarked.

"But I am not in the quarrel," says Miss Bell, retreating to the window; and here there is a rumble of wheels outside, and the phaeton stands at the door.

"You two must get up in front," says my lady as we go out into the white glare of Ormskirk. "I can watch you better there."

By this dexterous manœuvre Bell and the lieutenant were again separated. The young lady was never loth to sit in front, under whatever surveillance it placed her, for she liked driving. On this cool morning, that promised a warmer day after the wind had carried away the white fleece of cloud that stretched over the sky, she pulled on her gloves with great alacrity, and having got into her seat assumed the management of the reins as a matter of course.

"Gently!" I say to her as Castor and Pollux make a plunge forward into the narrow thoroughfare. A handbarrow is jutting out from the pavement. She gives a jerk to the left rein, but it is too late: one of our wheels just touches the end of the barrow and over it goes—not with any great crash, however.

"Go on," says the lieutenant from behind with admirable coolness. "There is no harm done, and there is no one in charge of that thing. When he comes he will pick it up."

"Very pretty conduct," remarks my lady as we get out among the green fields and meadows again, "injuring some poor man's property, and quietly

driving away without even offering compensation!"

"It was Bell who did it."

"As usual. The old story repeated from the days of Eden downward: 'The woman thou gavest me'—of course it is she who must bear the blame."

"Madam, your knowledge of Scripture is astounding. Who was the first attorney-general in the Bible?"

"Find out," says Tita; and the lieutenant bursts into a roar of laughter, as if that was a pretty repartee.

"And where do we stop to-night?" says our North-country maid, looking away along the green valley which is watered by the pretty Eller Brook.

"Garstang, on the river of Wyre."

"And to-morrow we shall really be in Westmoreland?"

"To-morrow we shall really be in Westmoreland. Wo-ho, my beauties! Why, Bell, if you try to leap across Lancashire at a bound like that, you'll have us in a canal or transfixed on a telegraph-post."

"I did not intend it," says Bell, "but they are as anxious as I am to get north, and they break into a gallop on no provocation whatever."

Indeed, the whole nature of this mad girl seemed to have a sort of resemblance to a magnetic needle: it was continuously turning to the North Pole, and that in a tremulous, undecided fashion, as if, with all her longing, she did not quite like to let people know. But at this moment she forgot that we were listening. It was really herself she was delighting with her talk about deep valleys and brown streams and the scent of peat-smoke in the air of an evening. All the time she was looking away up to the horizon, to see whether she could not make out some lines of blue mountains, until Tita suddenly said, "My dear!"

"Meaning me, ma'am?"

"No, I mean Bell. Pray keep a firmer hand on the horses: if a train were to come sharply by at present—and you see the road runs parallel with the railway-line for an immense distance."

"And so should we," says Bell lightly. "There is no danger. The poor animals

wouldn't do anything wicked at such a time, just when they are getting near to a long rest."

Under Bell's guidance we do not lose much time by the way. The road leaves the neighborhood of the railway. We drive past the great park of Rufford Hall. The wind blows across to us from the Irish Sea, and at the small village of Much Hoole, where the lieutenant insists on giving the horses a little meal and water as a sort of soothing draught, we come in sight of the long red line of the Ribble, widening out into a sandy channel as it nears the ocean. Bell catches a glimpse of the smoke of a steamer, and the vague knowledge that the plain of salt water is not far away seems to refresh us all as we plunge once more into the green and wooded country by Longton, Hutton and Howick.

"What is the greatest wish of your life, Bell?" I ask, knowing that she is dreaming of living somewhere along the coast of these islands.

"To see mamma pleased," says Bell quite prettily, just as if she were before a schoolmistress.

"You ask for the impossible. Tita's dream of earthly bliss is to have the cross in our little church turned to a crucifix, and it will never be realized. I think she would rather have that than be made a duchess."

"I do miss that dear little church," said Tita, taking no heed of the charge preferred against her. "There is no feeling of homeliness about the churches we go into here. You know that you are a stranger, and all the people are strangers, and you are not accustomed to the clergyman's voice."

"The fact is," I tell her, "you lose the sense of proprietorship which pleases you down at home. There the church is your own. You set out on a quiet Sunday morning, you know all the people coming through the fields and along the roads, and you have an eye on them to mark the absentees. There is a family gathering in the churchyard, and a universal shaking of hands: you are pleased that all the people are coming to your church. You go in, the evergreens ev-

erywhere about you put there yourself. The tall white lilies on the altar you presented to the vicar, though I paid for them. Bell sits down to the organ—probably thinking that her new boots may slip on one of the pedals and produce a discord in the bass—and you know that your family is providing the music too. The vicar and his wife dined with you the night before; you are in secret league with them. You know all the people—Lord ——'s butler, who is the most venerable person in the place; that squint-eyed publican who thrashes his wife on the Saturday so that she can't come on the Sunday; all the other various pensioners you have, who you vainly think are being taught to be independent and economical; and a lot of small boys in knickerbockers and shiny heads of hair, and pretty young ladies with sailors' hats, blue ribbons, white jackets and big wistful eyes. You are the presiding genius of the place; and when Bell begins the music, and the sunlight comes through the small and yellow windows in the southern aisle, and when you see the light shining on the mural tablets with the colored coats-of-arms above, you ask yourself what other place could produce this feeling of homely satisfaction, and what fashionable London church, with all its money, could manufacture these ancient blocks of marble, until you think you could spend all your own money, and all your husband's too, in making the small building a sort of ecclesiastical museum."

"I hope," says Tita, with great severity, "I do not go into church with any such thoughts. It is an auctioneer's view of a morning service."

"It is the business of an auctioneer, my good woman, to estimate the actual value of articles. But I forgot one thing. After you have contemplated the church with profound satisfaction—just as if those old knights and baronets had died in order to adorn the walls for you—your eye wanders up to the altar. It is a pretty altar-cloth: Goodness knows how much time you and Bell spent over it. The flowers on the altar are also beautiful, or ought to be, considering

the price that Benson charges for them. But that plain gilt cross with the three jewels in it—that is rather a blot, is it not?"

"Why don't you go to the zinc chapel?" says Tita with some contempt.

"I would if I dared."

"Who prevents you? I am sure it is not I. I would much rather you went there than come to church merely to calculate the cost of every bit of fern or yew that is placed on the walls, and to complain of the introduction into the sermon of doctrines which you can't understand."

"May I go to chapel, please?"

"Certainly. But you are a good deal fonder of going up to Mickleham Downs than to either church or chapel."

"Will you come to chapel, Bell?"

"I am not going to interfere," says Bell with philosophical indifference, and paying much more attention to her horses.

"I should be sorry to go," I observe calmly, "for I had half resolved to ask Mr. — to let me put in yellow glass in those two windows that are at present white."

"Oh, will you, really?" cries Queen Tita in a piteously eager tone, and quite forgetting all her war of words.

Well, I promise, somewhat sadly. It is not the cost of it that is the matter. But on those Sunday mornings when the sunlight is flooding the church with a solemn glow of yellow, it is something to turn to the two white windows, and there, through the diamond panes, you can see the sunlight shimmering on the breezy branches of an ash tree. This little glimpse of the bright and glowing world outside—when our vicar, who, it must be confessed, is not always in a happy mood, happens to be rather drowsy and even depressing in the monotony of his commonplaceness— But perhaps it will be better to say nothing more on this point.

Why the people of the flourishing town of Preston do not bridge the Ribble in a line running parallel with their chief thoroughfare and the road leading up from Harwich, is inexplicable. A pleas-

ure-party need not mind, for the drive is pleasant enough, but business-folks might be tempted to use bad language over such an unnecessary injury. The road makes a long double along the two banks of the river, the most westerly bridge forming the end of the loop. First, you drive down the left bank of the stream, over fine green meadows, then you cross the bridge and drive back along the right bank between avenues of young trees. Perhaps the notion is to give you as much as possible of the green and pleasant surroundings of Preston before letting you plunge into the streets of the town.

Now, I do not know how it was that from the moment of our entering Preston a vague feeling of satisfaction and hope seemed to get possession of our small party. We had started in the morning under somewhat embarrassing and awkward conditions, not likely to provoke high spirits, but now we seemed to have a nebulous impression that the end of our troubles had come. Was it because we had reached the last of the large manufacturing towns on our journey, and that we should meet with no more of them? Or was it because of that promise of Queen Titania? for that kindly little woman, when she is pleased, has a wonderful power of conveying her gladness to others, and has been known to sweeten a heavy dinner-party as a bunch of woodruff will sweeten a lumber-room. Or was it that we knew, in approaching Kendal, we should probably come to a final settlement of all our difficulties, and have thereafter peace?

As we were walking, after luncheon, through the spacious public gardens that overlook the Ribble, the lieutenant drew me aside and said, "My good friend, here is a favor I will ask of you. We come to-night to Garstang?"

"Yes, we shall reach Garstang to-night."

"A town or a village?"

"I don't know. Probably a village."

"I did hope it was not a town. Well, this is what I ask. You will endeavor to take away madame for a few moments—if we are out walking, you know—and

you will let me say a few words to mademoiselle by herself."

"I thought all your anxiety was to avoid her?"

"There is something I must say to her."

"All right! I will do what you ask, on condition you do not persecute her. When she wishes to rejoin us you must not prevent her."

"Persecute her? Then you do think I will quarrel with her and make her very miserable, merely because she will not marry me? You think it will be as it was at Worcester, when that stupid boy from Twickenham did go along the river? Well, all I ask you is to look at these two days. Has there been any quarrel between us? No, it is quite the opposite."

"Then let it remain that way, my dear fellow. One Arthur is bad enough for a girl to manage, but two would probably send her into a convent for life."

And the truth was as the lieutenant had described it. They had been during these two days more than polite to each other. Somehow, Bell was never done in paying him furtive little attentions, although she did not speak to him. That morning she had somewhere got a few wild flowers, and three tiny bouquets were placed on the breakfast-table. The lieutenant dared not think that one of them was for him. He apologized to mademoiselle for taking her seat. Bell said he had not: the bouquet was for him if he cared to have it, she added with a little diffidence. The lieutenant positively blushed, said nothing, and altogether neglected his own breakfast in offering her things she did not want. The bouquets given to Tita and her husband were pinned into prominent positions, but no human eye saw anything more of the wild blossoms that Bell had given to Von Rosen. Betting on a certainty is considered dishonorable, and so I will not say what odds I would give that these precious flowers were transferred to a book, and that at this moment they could be produced if a certain young man were only willing to reveal their whereabouts.

Everything seemed to favor us on this

fine afternoon as we drove away northward again. The road grew excellent, and we knew that we had finally left behind us that deafening causeway that had haunted our wheels and hoofs for days past. Then the cool breeze of the forenoon and mid-day had died down, and a still, warm sunset began to break over the western country between us and the sea. We could not, of course, get any glimpse of the great plain of water beyond the land; but we knew that this great fire of crimson and yellow was shining down on it too, and on the long curves of the shore.

The western sands could not be much more level than the road that runs up by Broughton and Brockbridge, but it takes one through a sufficiently pleasant country, which is watered by a multitude of brooks and small rivers. It is a rich and well-cultivated country, too, and the far-stretching meadows and copses and fields seemed to grow darker in their green under that smoke of dusky crimson that had filled the sky. It is true, we were still in Lancashire, and there was still present to us a double line of communication with the manufacturing towns we had now left behind. At certain places the road would run by the side of a railway-line, and then again we would find a canal winding itself like a snake through the grassy meadows. But a sunset is a wonderful smoother-down of these artificial features in a landscape, and when the earth-banks of the railway-line burned crimson under the darkening sky, or when an arm of the canal caught a flush of flame on its glassy surface, the picture was rather helped than otherwise, and we bore the engineers of this favored land no deadly grudge.

A sunset, by the way, was always favorable to Bell's appearance. It lent to those fine and wavy masses of hers a sort of glory; and this splendid aureole was about all of his sweetheart that the lieutenant could see as he sat in the hind seat of the phaeton. Bell wears her hair rather loose when she is out in the country, and greatly likes, indeed, to toss it about as if she were a young lion;

so that you may fancy how the warm light of the sunset glowed here and there on those light and silken heaps of golden-brown hair as we drove along in the quiet evening. Sometimes, indeed, he may have caught the outline of her face as she turned to look over the far landscape; and then, I know, the delicate oval was tinted by the generous color of the western skies, so that not alone in the miracle of her hair did she look like some transfigured saint.

Her talk on this evening, however, was far from saintly. It was as worldly as it well could be, for she was confessing to the agony she used to suffer after going home from dinner-parties, balls, and other godless diversions of a like nature.

"I used to dread going up to my room," she said, "for I could get no rest until I had sat down and gone over everything that I had said during the evening. And then all the consequences of my imprudence came rushing down on me until I felt I was scarcely fit to live. What I had been led into saying as a mere piece of merriment now looked terribly like impertinence. Many a time I wrote down on a piece of paper certain things that I resolved to go the next day and make an apology for to the old ladies whom I was sure I had offended. But the next morning things began to look a little better. A little reassurance came with the briskness of the day; and I used to convince myself that nobody would remember the heedless sayings that had been provoked by the general light talk and merriment. I absolved myself for that day, and promised and vowed and made the most desperate resolutions never, never to be thoughtless in the future, but always to watch every word I had to say."

"And in the evening," continued my lady, "you went out to another dance, and enjoyed yourself the same, and said as many wild things as usual, and went home again to do penance. It is quite natural, Bell. Most girls go through that terrible half hour of reaction, until they grow to be women—"

"And then," it is remarked, "they have never anything to be sorry about,

for they are always circumspect, self-possessed and sure about what they mean to say. They never have to spend a dreadful half hour in trying to recollect mistakes and follies."

"As for gentlemen," remarked Titania sweetly, "I have heard that their evil half hour is during the process of dressing, when they endeavor to recall the speech they made at the public dinner of the night before, and wonder how they could have been so stupid as to order a heap of champagne to oblige a friend just gone into that business, and are not very sure how many people they invited to dinner on the following Friday. Count von Rosen—"

"Yes, madame."

"When you observe a husband whistling while his wife is talking, what do you think?"

"That she is saying something he would rather not hear," replies the lieutenant gravely.

"And is not that a confession that what she says is true?"

"Yes, madame," says the lieutenant boldly.

"My dear," I say to her, "your brain has been turned by the last sporting novel you have read. You are a victim of cerebral inflammation. When you pride yourself on your researches into the ways and habits of the sex which you affect to despise, don't take that sort of farthing candle to guide you. As for myself, our young friend from Prussia would scarcely believe the time I spend in helping you to nail up brackets and larch and ivy in that wretched little church; and if he knew the trouble I have to keep Bell's accounts straight, when she is reckoning up what the process of producing paupers in our neighborhood costs us, why, he would look upon you as an unprincipled columnist."

"Mamma herself is scarcely so big as those two words put together," says Bell; but madame is laughing all this time, quite pleased to see that she has raised a storm in a tea-cup by her ungracious and unwarranted assault.

In the last red rays of the sun we have

got on to a small elevation. Before us the road dips down and crosses the canal; then it makes a twist again and crosses the Wyre; and up in that corner are the scattered gables of Garstang. As we pass over the river, it is running cold and dark between its green banks, and the sunset is finally drawing down to the west as we drive into the silent village and up to the doorstep of the Royal Oak.

'Tis a quaint and ancient hostelry. For aught we know, the earl of Derby's soldiers may have walked over hither for a draught of beer when they were garrisoning Greenhalgh Castle over there, and when the brave countess, away down at Latham, was herself fixing up the royal standard on the tower of the castle, as Mr. Leslie's picture shows us, and bidding defiance to the parliamentary troops. When you tell that story to Queen Titania, you can see her grow pale with pride and admiration, for did not the gallant countess send out word by Fairfax that she would defend the place until she lost her honor or her life, for that she had not forgotten what she owed to the Church of England, to her prince and to her lord? My lady looks as if she, too, could have sent that message; only that she would have stopped at the Church of England and gone no farther.

When we come out again the sunset has gone, and a wonderful pale green twilight lies over the land. We go out from the old-fashioned streets, and find ourselves by the banks of the clear running river. A pale metallic light shines along its surface, and as we walk along between the meadows and the picturesque banks, where there is an abundance of the mighty burdock leaves that are beloved of painters, an occasional splash is heard, whether of a rat or a trout no one can say. Somehow, the lieutenant has drawn Bell away from us. In the clear twilight we can see their figures sharp and black on the dark green slope beside the stream. Queen Tita looks rather wistfully at them, and is perhaps thinking of days long gone by, when she too knew the value of

silence on a beautiful evening by the side of a river.

"I hope it is not wrong," says my lady in a low voice, "but I confess I should like to see the lieutenant marry our Bell."

"Wrong? No. It is only the absent who are in the wrong—Arthur, for example, who is perhaps at Kendal at this moment, waiting for us."

"We cannot all be satisfied in this world," remarks Tita profoundly; "and as one of these two alone can marry Bell, I do hope it may be the lieutenant, in spite of what she says. I think it would be very pleasant for all of us. What nice neighbors they would be for us! for I know Bell would prefer to live down near us in Surrey, and the lieutenant can have no particular preference for any place in England."

"A nice holiday time we should have of it, with these two idle creatures living close by and making continual proposals to go away somewhere!"

"Bell would not be idle."

"She must give up her painting if she marries."

"She won't give it up altogether, I hope; and then there is her music, even if she had no household duties to occupy her time; and I know that she will make an active and thrifty housewife. Indeed, the only idler will be the lieutenant, and he can become a captain of volunteers."

And yet she says she never lays plans! that she has no wish to interfere between Arthur and Von Rosen! that she would rather see Bell relieved from the persecutions of both of them! She had already mapped out the whole affair; and her content was so great that a beautiful gladness and softness lay in her eyes, and she began to prattle about the two boys at school and all she meant to take home to them; and indeed, if she had been at home, she would have gone to the piano and sung to herself some low and gentle melody, as soft and as musical as the crooning of a wood-pigeon hid away among trees.

Then she said: "How odd that Bell should have begun to talk about these unfortunate slips of the tongue that haunt

you afterward! All these two days I haven't been able to get rid of the remembrance of that terrible mistake I made in speaking of Count Von Rosen and Bell as already married. But who knows?—there may be a providence in such things."

"The providence that lies in blunders of speech must be rather erratic; but it is no wonder you spoke by mischance of Bell's marrying the lieutenant, for you think of nothing else."

"But don't you think it would be a very good thing?"

"What I think of it is a different matter. What will Arthur think of it?"

"The whole world can't be expected to move round merely to please Arthur," says my lady with some asperity. "The fact is, those young men are so foolish that they never reflect that a girl can't marry two of them. They are always falling in love with a girl who has a suitor already, and then she is put to the annoyance of refusing one of them, and that one considers her a monster."

"Well, if any one is open to that charge in the present case, it certainly is not Arthur."

My lady did not answer. She was regarding with a tender eye those two young folks strolling through the meadows before us. What were they saying to each other? Would Bell relent? The time was propitious in the quiet of this pale, clear evening, with a star or two beginning to twinkle, and the moon about to creep up from behind the eastern woods. It was a time for lovers to make confessions and give tender pledges. None of us seemed to think of that wretched youth who was blindly driving through England in a dog-cart, and torturing himself in the horrible solitude of inns. Unhappy Arthur!

For mere courtesy's sake these two drew near to us again. We looked at them. Bell turned her face away, and stooped to pick up the white blossom of a campion that lay like a great glow-worm among the dark herbage. The lieutenant seemed a little more confident, and he was anxious to be very courteous and friendly toward Tita. That lady

was quite demure, and suggested that we might return to the village.

We clambered up a steep place that led from the hollow of the river to a higher plain, and here we found ourselves by the side of the canal. It looked like another river. There were grassy borders to it, and by the side of the path a deep wood descending to the fields beyond. The moon had now arisen, and on the clear, still water there were some ripples of gold. Far away, on the other side, the barns and haystacks of a farmhouse were visible in the pale glow of the sky.

"What is that?" said Tita, hurriedly, as a large white object sailed silently through the faint moonlight and swept into the wood.

Only an owl. But the sound of her voice had disturbed several of the great birds in the trees, and across the space between the wood and the distant farmhouse they fled noiselessly, with a brief reflection of their broad wings falling on the still waters as they passed. We remained there an unconscionable time, leaning on the stone parapet of the bridge, and watching the pale line of the canal, the ripples of the moonlight, the dark wood, and the great and dusky birds that floated about like ghosts in the perfect stillness. When we returned to Garstang the broad square in the centre of the place was glimmering gray in the moonlight, and black shadows had fallen along one side of the street.

"My dear friend," said Von Rosen in an excited and urgent way as soon as our two companions had gone up stairs to prepare for supper, "I have great news to tell you!"

"Bell has accepted you, I suppose," said I, the boy talking as if that were a remarkable phenomenon in the world's history.

"Oh no, nothing so good as that—nothing not near so good as that—but something very good indeed. It is not all finally disposed of—there is at least a little chance—one must wait; but is not this a very great hope?"

"And is that all you obtained by your hour's persuasion?"

"Pfui! You do talk as if it did not matter to a young girl whether she marries one man or marries another."

"I don't think it much matters really."

"Then this is what I tell you—"

But here some light footsteps were heard on the stairs, and the lieutenant suddenly ceased and rushed to open the door.

Bell was as rosy as a rose set amid green leaves when she entered. "We are very late," she said, as if she were rather afraid to hazard that startling and profound observation.

"Madame," said the lieutenant, "I give you my word this is the best ale we have drunk since we started: it is clear, bright, very bitter, brisk. It is worth a long journey to drink such ale; and I hope your husband, when he writes of our journey, will give our landlady great credit for this very good beer."

I do so willingly; but lest any ingenious traveler should find the ale of the Royal Oak not quite fulfill the expectations raised by this panegyric, I must rem'nd him that it was pronounced after the lieutenant had been walking for an hour along the banks of the Wyre on a beautiful evening, in the company of a very pretty young lady.

We had abolished *béziq*ue by this time. It had become too much of a farce. Playing four-handed *béziq*ue with partners is a clumsy contrivance; and when we had endeavored to play it independently, the audacity of the lieutenant in sacrificing the game to Bell's interests had got beyond a joke. So we had fallen back on whist, and as we made those two ardent young noodles partners, they did their best. It wasn't very good, to tell the truth. The lieutenant was as bad a whist-player as ever perplexed a partner, but Bell could play a weak suit as well as another. My lady was rather pleased to find that the lieutenant was not a skillful card-player. She was deeply interested in the qualities of Bell's future husband. In fact, if she had only known how, she would have examined the young men who came about the house—Bell has had a pretty fair show of suitors in her time—as to

the condition of the inner side of the right thumb. It is a bad sign when that portion of the hand gets rather horny. A man might as well go about with a piece of chalk marked Thurston & Co. in his waistcoat-pocket. But the lieutenant scarcely knew the difference between a cue and a pump-handle.

We played late. The people of the inn, yielding to our entreaties, had long ago gone to bed. When, at length, my lady and Bell also retired, the lieutenant rose from the table, stretched himself up his full length, and said, "My good friend, I have much of a favor to ask from you. I will repay you for it many times again—I will sit up with you and smoke all night as often as you please; which I think is your great notion of enjoyment. But now I have a great many things to tell you, and the room is close: let us go away for a walk."

It was only the strong nervous excitement of the young man that was longing for this outburst into the freedom of the cool air. He would have liked then to have started off at a rate of five miles an hour, and walk himself dead with fatigue. He was so anxious about it that at last we took a candle to the front door, got the bolts undone, and then, leaving the candle and the matches where we knew we should find them, we went out into the night.

By this time the moon had got well down into the south-west, but there was still sufficient light to show us the cottages, the roads and the trees. The night air was fresh and cool. As we started off on our vague ramble a cock crew, and the sound seemed to startle the deep sleep of the landscape. We crossed over the canal-bridge, and plunged boldly out into the still country, whither we knew not.

Then he told me all the story, beginning with the half-forgotten legend of *Fräulein Fallersleben*. I had had no idea that this practical and hard-headed young Uhlán had been so deeply struck on either occasion, but now at times there seemed to be a wild cry of ignorance in his confessions, as if he knew not what had happened to him, and

what great mystery of life he was now battling with. He described it as resembling somehow the unutterable sadness caused by the sudden coming of the spring, when, amid all the glory and wonder and delight of this new thing, a vague unrest and longing takes possession of the heart and will not be satisfied. All his life had been changed since his coming to England—turned in another direction, and made to depend for any value that might be left in it on a single chance. When he spoke of Bell perhaps marrying him, all the wild and beautiful possibilities of the future seemed to stretch out before him, until he was fairly at a loss for words. When he spoke of her finally going away from him, it was as of something he could not quite understand. It would alter all his life—how, he did not know; and the new and wonderful consciousness that by such a circumstance the world would grow all different to him seemed to him a mystery beyond explanation. He only knew that this strange thing had occurred; that it had brought home to him once more the old puzzles about life that had made him wonder as a boy; that he was drifting on to an irrevocable fate, now that the final decision was near.

He talked rapidly, earnestly, heeding little the blunders and repetitions into which he constantly fell; and not all the vesuvians in the world could have kept his cigar alight. He did not walk very fast, but he cut at the weeds and at the hedges with his stick, and doubtless startled with his blows many a sparrow and wren sleeping peacefully among the leaves. I cannot tell you a tith of what he said. The story seemed as inexhaustible as the nebulous mystery that he was obviously trying to resolve as it hung around him in impalpable folds. When he came to the actual question whether Bell had given him to understand that she might reconsider her decision, he was more reticent. He would not reveal what she had said. But there was no pride or self-looking in the anxiety about the result which he frankly expressed; and it is probable that if Bell had heard him then, she would have

learned more of his nature and sentiments than during any hour's stroll under the supervision of her guardians.

When at length we turned a shock of wonder struck upon our eyes. The day had begun to break in the east, and a cold wind was stirring. As yet there was only a faint light in the dark sky, but by and by a strange, clear whiteness rose up from behind the still landscape, and then a wild, cold, yellow radiance, against which the tall poplars looked intensely black, overspread the far regions of the east. Wan and unearthly seemed that metallic glare, even when a pale glimmer of red ran up and through it; and as yet it looked like the sunrise of some other world, for neither man nor beast was awake to greet it, and all the woods were as silent as the grave. When we got back to Garstang the wind came chill along the gray stones, the birds were singing, and the glow of the sunrise was creeping over the chimneys and slates of the sleeping houses. We left this wonderful light outside, plunged into the warm and gloomy passage of the inn, and presently tumbled, tired and shivering, into bed.

CHAPTER XX.

CHLOE'S GARLAND.

The pride of every grove I chose—
The violet sweet and lily fair,
The dappled pink and blushing rose—
To deck my charming Chloe's hair.

At morn the nymph vouchsafed to place
Upon her brow the various wreath—
The flowers less blooming than her face,
The scent less fragrant than her breath.

The flowers she wore along the day,
And every nymph and shepherd said
That in her hair they looked more gay
Than glowing in their native bed.

Is there any blue half so pure and deep and tender as that of the large crane's-bill, the *Geranium pratense* of the botanists? When Bell saw the beautiful, rich-colored blossoms in the tall hedge-rows she declared we were already in the North country, and must needs descend from the phaeton to gather some of the wild flowers; and lo! all

around there was such a profusion that she stood bewildered before them. Everywhere about were the white stars of the stitchwort glimmering among the green of the goose-grass. The clear red blossoms of the campion shone here and there, and the viscid petals of the ragged robin glimmered a bright crimson as they straggled through the thorny branches of the hawthorn. Here, too, was the beautiful hare-bell—the real “blue-bell of Scotland”—with its slender stem and its pellucid color; and here was its bigger and coarser relative, the great hedge campanula, with its massive bells of azure and its succulent stalk. There were yellow masses of snapdragon, and an abundance of white and pink roses sweetening the air, and all the thousand wonders of a luxuriant vegetation. The lieutenant immediately jumped down. He harried the hedges as if they had been a province of the enemy's country, and he in quest of forage and food. The delight of Bell in these wild flowers was extravagant, and when he had gathered for her every variety of hue that he could see, she chose a few of the blossoms and twisted them, with a laugh of light pleasure, into the breezy masses of her hair. Could a greater compliment have been paid him?

If it was not really the North country which Bell so longed to enter, it was on the confines of it, and already many premonitory signs were visible. These tall hedge-rows with their profusion of wildflowers were a wonder. We crossed dark-brown streams, the picturesque banks of which were smothered in every sort of bush and herb and plant. At last a breath of the morning air brought us a strange, new scent that was far more grateful than that of any wreath of flowers, and at the same moment both Bell and Tita called out, “Oh, there is the peat-smoke at last!”

Peat-smoke it was, and presently we came upon the cottages which were sending abroad this fragrance into the air. They were hidden down in a dell by the side of a small river, and they were surrounded by low and thick elder

trees. Bell was driving. She would not even stop to look at this picturesque little nook: it was but an outpost, and the promised land was nigh.

The day, meanwhile, is gray and showery, but sometimes a sudden burst of sunshine springs down on the far, flat landscape, and causes it to shine in the distance. We pass by many a stately hall and noble park—Bell, with the wild flowers in her hair, still driving—until we reach the top of a certain height and find a great prospect lying before us. The windy day has cleared away the light clouds in the west, and there, under a belt of blue, lies a glimmer of the blue sea. The plain of the landscape leading down to it is divided by the estuary of the Lune, and as you trace the course of the river, up through the country that lies gray under the gray portion of the heavens, some tall buildings are seen in the distance and a fortress upon a height resembling some smaller Edinburgh Castle. We drive on through the gusty day, the tail of a shower sometimes overtaking us from the south and causing a hurried clamor for waterproofs, which have immediately to be set aside as the sun bursts forth again, and then we dive into a clean, bright, picturesque town, and find ourselves in front of the King's Arms at Lancaster.

Bell has taken the flowers from her hair in nearing the abodes of men, but she has placed them tenderly by the side of the bouquet that the lieutenant gathered for her, and now she gently asks a waiter for a tumbler of water, into which the blossoms are put. The lieutenant watches her every movement as anxiously as ever a Roman watched the skimmings and dippings of the bird whose flight was to predict ruin or fortune to him. He had no opportunities to lose. Time was pressing on. That night we were to reach Kendal, and there the enemy was lying in wait.

Bell, at least, did not seem much to fear that meeting with Arthur. When she spoke of him to Tita she was grave and thoughtful, but when she spoke of Westmoreland there was no qualification of her unbounded hope and delight.

She would scarce look at Lancaster, although, when we went up to the castle, and had a walk round to admire the magnificent view from the walls, an unwonted stir in front of the great gate told us that something unusual had happened. The lieutenant went down and mixed with the crowd. We saw him—a head and shoulder taller than the assemblage of men and women—speaking now to one and now to another; and then at length he came back. "Madame," he says, "there is something wonderful to be seen in the castle. All these people are pressing to get in."

"Is it some soup-plate of Henry VIII. that has been disinterred?" she asked with a slight show of scorn. Indeed, she seldom loses an opportunity of sticking another needle into her mental image of that poor monarch.

"Oh no: it is something much more interesting. It is a murderer."

"A murderer!"

"Yes, madame, but you need not feel alarmed. He is caged—he will not bite. All these good people are going in to look at him."

"I would not look at the horrid creature for worlds."

"He is not a monster of iniquity," I tell her. "On the contrary, he is a harmless creature and deserves your pity. All he did was to kill his wife."

"And I suppose they will punish him with three months' imprisonment," says Queen Tita, "whereas they would give him seven years if he had stolen a purse with half a crown in it."

"Naturally. I consider three months a great deal too much, however. Doubtless she contradicted him."

"But it is not true, Tita," says Bell: "none of us knew that the murderer was in the castle until this moment. How can you believe that he killed his wife?"

"There may be a secret sympathy between these two," says my lady with a wicked laugh in her eyes, "which establishes a communication between them which we don't understand. You know the theory of brain-waves. But it is hard that the one should be within the prison and the other without."

"Yes, it's very hard for the one without. The one inside the prison has got rid of his torment and escaped into comparative quiet."

She is a dutiful wife. She never retorts—when she hasn't a retort ready. She takes my arm just as if nothing had happened, and we go down from the castle square into the town. And behold! as we enter the gray thoroughfares a wonderful sight comes into view. Down the far white street, where occasional glimpses of sunlight are blown across by the wind, a gorgeous procession is seen to advance—glittering in silver, and colored plumes, and all the pomp and circumstance of a tournament. There is a cry of amazement throughout Lancaster, and from all points of the compass people hurry up. It is just two, and men from the factories, come out for their dinner, stand amazed on the pavement. The procession comes along through the shadow and the sunlight like some gleaming and gigantic serpent with scales of silver and gold. There are noble knights dressed in complete armor and seated on splendid chargers. They bring with them spears and banners and other accessories of war, and their horses are shining with the magnificence of their trappings. There are ladies wearing the historical costumes which are familiar to us in picture-galleries, and they are seated on cream-white palfreys with flowing manes and tails that sweep the ground. Then a resplendent palanquin appears in view drawn by six yellow horses, and waving and trembling with plumes of pink and white. Inside this great and gilded carriage the Queen of Beauty sits enthroned, attended by ladies whose trains of silk and satin shine like the neck of a dove. And the while our eyes are still dazzled with the glory of this slowly-passing pageant, the end of it appears in the shape of a smart and natty little trap driven by the proprietor of the circus in plain clothes. The anti-climax is too much. The crowd regard this wretched fellow with disdain. When an historical play is produced, and we are introduced to the majesty of war, and even shown

the king's tent on the battle-field, the common sutler is hidden out of sight. This wretched man's obtrusion of himself was properly resented, for the spectacle of the brilliant procession coming along the gray and white thoroughfares, with a breezy sky overshadowing or lighting it up, was sufficiently imposing, and ought not to have been destroyed by the vanity of a person in plain clothes who wanted to let us know that he was the owner of all this splendor, and who thought he ought to come last, as Noah did on going into the ark.

"Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds!"—that was the wish I knew lay deep down in Bell's heart as we went away from Lancaster. If Castor and Pollux did their work gallantly, we should sleep to-night in Kendal, and thereafter there would be abundant rest. This last day's journey consisted of thirty-three miles—considerably above our average day's distance—and we had accordingly cut it up into three portions. From Garstang to Lancaster is eleven miles; from Lancaster to Burton is eleven miles; from Burton to Kendal is eleven miles. Now, Burton is in Westmoreland, and once within her own county Bell knew she was at home.

'Twas a perilous sort of day in which to approach the region of northern lakes. In the best of weather the great mass of mountains that stand on the margin of the sea, ready to condense any moist vapors that may float in from the west and south, play sudden tricks sometimes and drown the holiday-makers whom the sun has drawn out of the cottages, houses and hotels up in the deep valleys. But here there were abundant clouds racing and chasing each other like the folks who sped over Cannobie Lea to overtake the bride of young Lochinvar; and now and again the wind would drive down on us the flying fringes of one of these masses of vapor, producing a temporary fear. Bell cared least for these premonitions. She would not even cover herself with a cloak. Many a time we could see raindrops glimmering in her brown hair and dripping from the flowers that she had again

twisted in the folds; but she sat erect and glad, with a fine color in her face that the wet breeze only heightened. When we got up to Slyne and Bolton-le-sands, and came in sight of the long sweep of Morecambe Bay, she paid no attention to the fact that all along the far margin of the sea the clouds had melted into a white belt of rain. It was enough for her that the sun was out there too, sometimes striking with a pale silvery light on the plain of the sea, sometimes throwing a stronger color on the long curve of level sand. A wetter or windier sight never met the view of an apprehensive traveler than that great stretch of sea and sky. The glimmer of the sun only made the moisture in the air more apparent as the gray clouds were sent flying up from the south-west. We could not tell whether the sea was breaking white or not, but the fierce blowing of the wind was apparent in the hurrying trails of cloud and the rapidly-shifting shafts of sunlight that now and again shot down on the sands.

"Bell," said Tita with a little anxiety, "you used to pride yourself on being able to forecast the weather when you lived up among the hills. Don't you think we shall have a wet afternoon?—and we have nearly twenty miles to go yet!"

The girl laughed.

"Mademoiselle acknowledges we shall have a little rain," said the lieutenant with a grim smile. If Bell was good at studying the appearances of the sky, he had acquired some skill in reading the language of her eloquent face.

"Why," says one of the party, "a deaf man down in a coal-pit could tell what sort of afternoon we shall have. The wind is driving the clouds up. The hills are stopping them on the way. When we enter Westmoreland we shall find the whole forces of the rain-fiends drawn out in array against us. But that is nothing to Bell, so long as we enter Westmoreland."

"Ah, you shall see," remarks Bell: "we may have a little rain this evening."

"Yes, that is very likely," said the lieutenant, who seemed greatly tickled by this frank admission.

"But to-morrow, if this strong wind keeps up all right, would you be astonished to find Kendal with its stone houses all shining white in the sun?"

"Yes, I should be astonished."

"You must not provoke the proph-
tess," says my lady, who is rather nervous about rainy weather, "or she will turn round on you and predict all sorts of evil."

We could not exactly tell when we crossed the border line of Westmoreland, or doubtless Bell would have jumped down from the phaeton to kneel and kiss her native soil; but at all events when we reached the curious little village of Burton we knew we were then in Westmoreland, and Bell ushered us into the ancient hostelry of the Royal Oak as if she had been the proprietress of that and all the surrounding country. In former days Burton was doubtless a place of importance, when the stage-coaches stopped here before plunging into the wild mountain-country, and in the inn, which remains pretty much what it was in the last generation, were abundant relics of the past. When the lieutenant and I returned from the stables to the old-fashioned little parlor and the museum of the place, we found Bell endeavoring to get some quivering, trembling, metallic notes out of the piano, that was doubtless a fine piece of furniture at one time. A piece of yellow ivory informed the beholder that this venerable instrument had been made by "Thomas Tomkison, Dean street, Soho, Manufacturer to His Royal Highness the Prince Regent." And what was this that Bell was hammering out?—

The standard on the braes o' Mar
Is up and streaming rarely!
The gathering pipe on Lochnagar
Is sounding lang and clearly!
The Highlandmen, from hill and glen,
In martial hue, wi' bonnets blue,
Wi' belted plaids and burnished blades,
Are coming late and early.

How the faded old instrument groaned and quivered as if it were struggling to get up some martial sentiment of its half-forgotten youth! It did its best to pant after that rapid and stirring air, and labored and jangled in a pathetic

fashion through the chords. It seemed like some poor old pensioner, decrepit and feeble-eyed, who sees a regiment passing with their band playing, and who tries to straighten himself up as he hears the tread of the men, and would fain step out to the sound of the music, but that his thin legs tremble beneath him. The wretched old piano struggled hard to keep up with the "Gathering of the Clans" as they hastened on to the braes o' Mar:

Wha wouldna join our noble chief,
The Drummond and Glengarry;
Macgregor, Murray, Rollo, Keith,
Panmure and gallant Harry:
Macdonald's men,
Clan Ranald's men,
M'Kenzie's men,
MacGilvray's men,
Strathallan's men,
The Lowland men
Of Callender and Airlie?—

until my lady put her hand gently on Bell's shoulder and said, "My dear, this is worse than eating green apples."

Bell shut down the lid. "It is time for this old thing to be quiet," she said. "The people who sang with it when it was in its prime, they cannot sing any more now, and it has earned its rest."

Bell uttered these melancholy words as she turned to look out of the window. It was rather a gloomy afternoon. There was less wind visible in the motion of the clouds, but in place of the flying and hurrying masses of vapor, an ominous pall of gray was visible, and the main thoroughfare of Burton-in-Kendal was gradually growing moister under a slow rain. Suddenly Bell said, "Is it possible for Arthur to have reached Kendal?"

The lieutenant looked up with some thing of a frown on his face.

"Yes," I say to her, "if he keeps up the pace with which he started. Thirty miles a day in a light dog-cart will not seriously damage the major's cob, if only he gets a day's rest now and again."

"Then perhaps Arthur may be coming along this road just now?"

"He may, but it is hardly likely. He would come over by Kirkby Lonsdale."

"I think we should be none the worse for his company if he were to arrive,"

says Tita with a little apprehension, "for it will be dark long before we get to Kendal; and on such a night, too, as we are likely to have!"

"Then let us start at once, madame," said the lieutenant. "The horses will be ready to be put in harness now, I think, and they must have as much time for the rest of the journey as we can give them. Then the waterproofs—I will have them all taken out, and the rugs. We shall want much more than we have, I can assure you of that. And the lamps—we shall want them too."

The lieutenant walked off to the stables with these weighty affairs of state possessing his mind. He was as anxious to preserve these two women from suffering a shower of rain as if he thought they were made of bride-cake. Out in the yard we found him planning the disposal of the rugs with the eye of a practiced campaigner, and taking every boy and man in the place into his confidence. Whatever embarrassment his imperfect English might cause him in a drawing-room, there was no need to guard his speech in a stable-yard. But sometimes our Uhlán was puzzled. What could he make, for example, of the following sentence, addressed to him by a worthy ostler at Garstang: "Yaas, an ah gied'n a aff booket o' chilled watter after ah'd weshen 'n"? Of the relations of the lieutenant with the people whom he thus casually encountered, it may be said generally that he was "hail-fellow-well-met" with any man who seemed of a frank and communicable disposition. With a good-natured landlord or groom he would stand for any length of time talking about horses, their food, their ways and the best methods of doctoring them. But when he encountered a sulky ostler the unfortunate man had an evil time of it. His temper was not likely to be improved by the presence of this lounging young soldier, who stood whistling at the door of the stable and watching that every bit of the grooming was performed to a nicety, who examined the quality of the oats and was not content with the hay, and who calmly stood by the horses' heads until he had seen

the animals eat every grain of corn that had been put in the manger.

A vague proposition that we should remain at Burton for that night was unanimously rejected. Come what might, we should start in Kendal with a clear day before us; and what mattered this running through our final stage in rain? A more feasible proposition, that both the women should sit in front, so as to get the benefit of the hood, was rejected, because neither of them would assume the responsibility of driving in the dark. But here a new and strange difficulty occurred. Of late, Bell and the lieutenant had never sat together in the phaeton. Now the lieutenant declared it was much more safe that the horses should be driven by their lawful owner, who was accustomed to them. Accordingly, my post was in front. Thereupon, Bell, with many protestations of endearment, insisted on Queen Tita having the shelter of the hood. Bell, in fact, would not get up until she had seen my lady safely ensconced there and swathed up like a mummy: it followed, accordingly, that Bell and her companion were hidden from us by the hood; and the last of our setting-out arrangements was simply this—that the lieutenant absolutely and firmly refused to wear his waterproof, because, as he said, it would only have the effect of making the water run in streams on to Bell's tartan plaid. The girl put forward all manner of entreaties in vain. The foolish young man—he was on the headstrong side of thirty—would not hear of it.

So we turned the horses' heads to the north. Alas! over the mountainous country before us there lay an ominous darkness of sky. As we skirted Curwen Woods and drove by within sight of Clawthorpe Fell, the road became more hilly and more lonely, and it seemed as if we were to plunge into an unknown region inhabited only by mountains and hanging clouds. But it was at such gloomy moments we found that our spirits invariably rose to their highest pitch. We could hear Bell laughing and chatting to the lieutenant about what we should have to endure before

we got to Kendal. As the wind rose slightly and blew the light waves of her laughter about, Tita called through to her and asked her to sing again that "Gathering of the Clans" on the breezy braes o' Mar. But what would the wild mountain-spirits have done to us had they heard the twanging of a guitar up in this dismal region, to say nothing of the rain that would have destroyed the precious instrument for ever? For it was now pattering considerably on the top of the hood, and the wind had once more begun to blow. The darkness grew apace. The winding gray thread of the road took us up hill and down dale, twisting through a variegated country, of which we could see little but the tall hedges each side of us. The rain increased. The wind blew it about, and moaned through the trees, and made a sound in the telegraph-wires overhead. These tall gray poles were destined to be an excellent guide to us. As the gloom gathered over us we grew accustomed to the monotonous rising and falling of the pale road, while here and there we encountered a great pool of water, which made the younger of the horses swerve from time to time. By and by we knew it would be impossible to make out any finger-post, so that the murmuring of the telegraph-wires in the wind promised to tell us if we were still keeping the correct route to Kendal.

So we plunged on in the deepening twilight, splashing into the shallow pools and listening to the whistling of the wind and the hissing of the rain. Bell had made no attempt to call out the clans on this wild night, and both of the young folks had for the most part relapsed into silence, unless when they called to us some consolatory message or assurance that on the whole they rather enjoyed getting wet. But at last the lieutenant proposed that he should get down and light the lamps; and, indeed, it was high time.

He got down. He came round to the front. Why the strange delay of his movements? He went round again to his seat, kept searching about for what seemed an unconscionable time, and

then coming back, said rather diffidently, "Do you happen to have a match with you?"

"No," said I; and at the same moment Tita broke into a bright laugh.

She knew the shame and mortification that were now on the face of the lieutenant, if only there had been more light to see him as he stood there. To have an old campaigner tricked in this way! He remained irresolute for a second or two, and then he said in accents of profound vexation, "It is such stupidity as I never saw. I did leave my case in the inn. Madame, you must pardon me this ridiculous thing, and we must drive on until we come to a house."

A house! The darkness had now come on so rapidly that twenty houses would scarcely have been visible, unless with yellow lights burning in their windows. There was nothing for it but to urge on our wild career as best we might, while we watched the telegraph-posts to tell us how the road went, and *Castor* and *Pollux*, with the wet streaming down them, dragged the four wheels through the water and mud.

Tita had been making merry on our mishap, but this jocularly died away in view of the fact that at every moment there was a chance of our driving into a ditch. She forgot to laugh in her efforts to make out the road before us; and at last when we drove into an avenue of trees under which there was pitch blackness, and as we felt that the horses were going down a hill, she called out to stop, so that one of us should descend and explore the way.

A blacker night has not occurred since the separating of light and darkness at the creation; and when the lieutenant had got to the horses' heads it was with the greatest difficulty he could induce them to go forward and down the hill. He had himself to feel his way in a very cautious fashion; and indeed his man-aging to keep the phaeton somewhere about the middle of the road until we had got from under this black avenue must be regarded as a feat. He had scarcely got back into his seat when the rain, which had been coming down pretty

heavily, now fell in torrents. We could hear it hissing in the pools of the road and all around us on the trees and hedges, while the phaeton seemed to be struggling through a waterfall. No plaids, rugs, mackintoshes or other device of man could keep this deluge out; and Tita, with an air of calm resignation, made the remark that one of her shoes had come off and floated away. To crown all, we suddenly discovered that the telegraph-posts had abandoned us and gone off along another road.

I stopped the horses. To miss one's way in the wilds of Westmoreland on such a night was no joke.

"Now, Bell, what has become of your knowledge of this district? Must we go back and follow the telegraph-wires? Or shall we push on on chance?"

"I can neither see nor speak for the rain," cries Bell out of the darkness. "But I think we ought to follow the telegraph-wires. They are sure to lead to Kendal."

"With your permission, mademoiselle," said the lieutenant, who was once more down in the road, "I think it would be a pity to go back. If we drive on we must come to a village somewhere."

"They don't happen so often in Westmoreland as you might expect," says Bell dependently.

"If you will wait here, then, I will go forward and see if I can find a house," says the lieutenant, at which Queen Tita laughs again, and says we should all be washed away before he returned.

The lieutenant struggles into his seat. We push on blindly. The rain is still thundering down on us, and we wonder whether we are fated to find ourselves in the early dawn somewhere, about Wast Water or Coniston.

About two hours before midnight, Columbus, standing on the fore-castle, observed a light in the distance, and privately pointed it out to Queen Titania.

"'Tis a turnpike, as I am a living navigator!" exclaimed the adventurous man.

A gun would have been fired from the deck of the *Pinta* to announce these joyful tidings, only that the rain had washed

away our powder. But now that we were cheered with the sight of land, we pushed ahead gallantly. The light grew in size and intensity; there could be no doubt this wild region was inhabited by human beings; and at last a native appeared, who addressed us in a tongue which we managed with some difficulty to understand, and, having exacted from us a small gift, he allowed us to proceed.

Once more we plunge into darkness and wet, but we know that Kendal is near. Just as we are approaching the foot of the hill, however, on which the town stands a wild shriek from Titania startles the air. The black shadow of a dog-cart is seen to swerve across in front of the horses' heads, and just skims by our wheels. The wrath that dwelt in my lady's heart with regard to the two men in this phantom vehicle need not be expressed; for what with the darkness of the trees, and the roaring of the wind and rain, and the fact of these two travellers coming at a fine pace along the wrong side of the road, we just escaped a catastrophe.

But we survived that danger, too, as we survived the strife of the elements. We drove up into the town. We wheeled round by the archway of still another King's Arms; and presently a half-drowned party of people, with their eyes not yet accustomed to the darkness, wholly bewildered with the light, were standing in the warm and yellow glare of the hotel. There was a fluttering of dripping waterproofs, a pulling asunder of soaked plaids, and a drying of wet and gleaming checks that were red with the rain. The commotion raised by our entrance was alarming: you would have thought we had taken possession of this large, warm, comfortable old-fashioned inn. A thousand servants seemed to be scampering about the house to assist us; and by and by, when all those moist garments had been taken away and other and warmer clothing put on, and a steaming and fragrant banquet placed on the table, you should have seen the satisfaction that dwelt on every face. Arthur had not come: at least, no one had been making inquiries for us. There

was nothing for us but to attack the savory feast, and relate with laughter and with gladness all the adventures of the day, until you would have thought that the grave mother of those two boys at Twickenham had grown merry with the champagne, whereas she had not yet tasted the wine that was frothing and creaming in her glass.

CHAPTER XXI.

ALL ABOUT WINDERMERE.

O meekest dove

Of Heaven! O Cynthia, ten-times bright and fair!
From thy blue throne, now filling all the air,
Glance but one little beam of tempered light
Into my bosom, that the dreadful might
And tyranny of love be somewhat scared.

It is a pleasant thing, especially in holiday-time, when one happens to have gone to bed with the depressing consciousness that outside the house the night is wild and stormy—rain pouring ceaselessly down and the fine weather sped away to the south—to catch a sudden glimmer, just as one opens one's eyes in the morning, of glowing green, where the sunlight is quivering on the waving branches of the trees. The new day is a miracle of freshness. The rain has washed the leaves, and the wind is shaking and rustling them in the warm light. You throw open the window, and the breeze that comes blowing in is sweet with the smell of the country. It is a new, bright, joyous day, and the rain and the black night have fled together.

Bell's audacity in daring to hope we might have a fine morning after that wild evening had almost destroyed our belief in her weather-foresight; but sure enough, when we got up on the following day, the stone houses of Kendal were shining in the sun, and a bright light coloring up the faces of the country-people who had come into the town on early business. And what was this we heard?—a simple and familiar air that carried my lady back to that small church in Surrey over which she presides, sung carelessly and lightly by a young lady who certainly did not know that she could be overheard:

Hark, hark, my soul! angelic songs are swelling
O'er earth's green fields and ocean's wave-beat shore.

Bell was at her orisons, but as the hymn only came to us in fitful and uncertain snatches, we concluded that the intervals were filled up by that light-hearted young woman twisting up the splendid folds of her hair. There was no great religious fervor in her singing, to be sure. Sometimes the careless songstress forgot to add the words, and let us have fragments of the pretty air, of which she was particularly fond. But there was no reason at all why this pious hymn should be suddenly forsaken for the "rataplan, rataplan, rataplan—rataplan, plan, plan, plan, plan," of the "Daughter of the Regiment."

When we went down stairs Bell was gravely perusing the morning papers. At this time the government were hurrying their ballot bill through the House, and the daily journals were full of clauses, amendments and divisions. Bell wore rather a puzzled look, but she was so deeply interested—whether for the "Parliamentary Summary" or the "Fashionable Intelligence" can only be guessed—that she did not observe our entering the room. My lady went gently forward to her and said,

"Hark, hark, my soul! angelic songs are swelling
O'er earth's green fields—"

The girl looked up with a start, and with a little look of alarm.

"Young ladies," observed Tita, "who have a habit of humming airs during their toilet ought to be sure that their room is not separated by a very thin partition from any other room."

"If it was only you, I don't care."

"It mightn't have been only me."

"There is no great harm in a hymn," says Bell.

"But when one mixes up a hymn with that wicked song which Maria and the sergeant sing together? Bell, we will forgive you everything this morning. You are quite a witch with the weather, and you shall have a kiss for bringing us such a beautiful day."

The morning salutation is performed.

"Isn't there enough of that to go round?" says the third person of the

group. "Bell used to kiss me dutifully every morning. But a French writer has described a young lady as a creature that ceases to kiss gentlemen at twelve and begins again at twenty."

"A French writer!" says Tita. "No French writer ever said anything so impertinent and so stupid. The French are a cultivated nation, and their wit never takes the form of rudeness."

A nation or a man—it is all the same—attack either, and my lady is ready with a sort of formal warranty of character.

"But why, Tita," says Bell, with just a trifle of protest in her voice—"why do you always praise the French nation? Other nations are as good as they are."

The laughter that shook the coffee-room of the King's Arms in Kendal when this startling announcement was made cannot be conveyed in words. There was something so audaciously ingenuous in Bell's protest that even Tita laughed till the tears stood in her eyes, and then she kissed Bell and asked her pardon, and remarked that she was ready to acknowledge at any moment that the German nation was as good as the French nation.

"I did not mean anything of the kind," says Bell, looking rather shamefaced. "What does it matter to me what any one thinks of the German nation?"

That was a true observation, at least. It did not matter to her nor to anybody. The anthropomorphic abstractions which we call nations are very good pegs to hang prejudices on, but they do not suffer much or gain much by any opinion we may form of their 'characteristics.'

"Where is Count von Rosen?" says Tita.

"I do not know," answered Bell with an excellent assumption of indifference. "I have not seen him this morning. Probably he will come in and tell us that he has been to Windermere."

"No, mademoiselle," said the lieutenant, entering the room at the same moment, "I have not been to Windermere,

but I am very anxious to go, for the morning is very fresh and good, and is it possible to say that it will remain fine all the day? We may start directly after breakfast. I have looked at the horses. They are all very well, and have suffered nothing from the rain: they are looking contented and comfortable after the bran-mash of last night, and to-morrow they will start again very well."

"And you have heard nothing of Arthur?" asks my lady.

"No."

Was the lieutenant likely to have been scouring the country in search of that young man?

"It is very strange! If he found himself unable to get here by the time he expected to meet us, it is a wonder he did not send on a message. I hope he has met with no accident."

"No, there is no fear, madame," said the lieutenant: "he will overtake us soon. He may arrive to-night, or to-morrow before we go—he cannot make a mistake about finding us. But you do not propose to wait anywhere for him?"

"No," I say decisively, "we don't. Or if we do wait for him it will not be in Kendal."

The lieutenant seemed to think that Arthur would overtake us soon enough, and need not further concern us. But my lady appeared to be a little anxious about the safety of the young man until it was shown us that, after all, Arthur might have been moved to give the major's cob a day's rest somewhere, in which case he could not possibly have reached Kendal by this time.

We go out into the sunlit and breezy street. We can almost believe Bell that there is a peculiar sweetness in the Westmoreland air. We lounge about the quaint old town, which, perched on the steep slope of a hill, has sometimes those curious juxtapositions of doorstep and chimney-pot which are familiar to the successive terraces of Dartmouth. We go down to the green banks of the river, and the lieutenant is bidden to observe how rapid and clear the brown stream is, even after coming through the dyeing- and bleaching-works. He is walking on

in front with Bell. He does not strive to avoid her now—on the contrary, they are inseparable companions—but my lady puzzles herself in vain to discover what are their actual relations toward each other at this time. They do not seem anxious or dissatisfied. They appear to have drifted back into those ordinary friendly terms of intercourse which had marked their setting-out; but how is this possible after what occurred in Wales? As neither has said anything to us about these things, nothing is known: these confidences have been invariably voluntary, and my lady is quite well pleased that Bell should manage her own affairs.

Certainly if Bell was at this time being pressed to decide between Von Rosen and Arthur, that unfortunate youth from Twickenham was suffering grievously from an evil fortune. Consider what advantages the lieutenant had in accompanying the girl into this dreamland of her youth, when her heart was opening out to all sorts of tender recollections, and when, to confer a great gratification upon her, you had only to say that you were pleased with Westmoreland and its sunlight and its people and scenery. What adjectives that perfervid Uhlan may have been using—and he was rather a good hand at expressing his satisfaction with anything—we did not try to hear; but Bell wore her brightest and happiest looks. Doubtless the lieutenant was telling her that there was no water in the world could turn out such brilliant colors as those we saw bleaching on the meadows, that no river in the world ran half so fast as the Kent, and that no light could compare with the light of a Westmoreland sky in beautifying and clarifying the varied hues of the landscape that lay around. He was greatly surprised with the old-fashioned streets when we had clambered up to the town again. He paid particular attention to the railway-station. When a porter caught a boy back from the edge of the platform and angrily said to him, "Wut's thee doin' thear, an' the traäin a-coomin' oop?" he made as though he understood the man. This was Bell's coun-

try, and everything in it was profoundly interesting.

However, when the train had once got away from the station, and we found ourselves being carried through the fresh and pleasant landscape, with a cool wind blowing in at the window, and all the trees outside bending and rustling in the breeze, it was not merely out of compliment to Bell that he praised the brightness of the day and the beauty of the country around.

"And it is so comforting to think of the horses enjoying a day's thorough rest," said Tita, "for when we start again to-morrow they will have to attack some hard work."

"Only at first," said Bell, who was always ready to show that she knew the road: "the first mile or so is hilly, but after that the road goes down to Windermere and runs along by the lake to Ambleside. It is a beautiful drive through the trees, and if we get a day like this—"

No wonder she turned to look out with pride and delight on the great and glowing picture that lay around us, the background of which had glimpses of blue mountains lying pale and misty under light masses of cloud. The small stations we passed were smothered in green foliage. Here and there we caught sight of a brown rivulet or a long avenue of trees arching over a white road. And then, in an incredibly short space of time, we found ourselves outside the Windermere station, standing in the open glare of the day.

For an instant a look of bewilderment, and even of disappointment, appeared on Bell's face. Evidently, she did not know the way. The houses that had sprung up of late years were strangers to her—strangers that seemed to have no business there. But whereas the new buildings and the cutting of terraces and alterations of gardens were novel and perplexing phenomena, the general features of the neighborhood remained the same, and after a momentary hesitation she hit upon the right path up to Ellery, and thereafter was quite at home.

Now there rests in our Bell's mind a

strange superstition that she can remember, as a child, having sat upon Christopher North's knee. The story is wholly impossible and absurd, for Wilson died in the year in which Bell was born, but she nevertheless preserves the fixed impression of having seen the kingly old man, and wondered at his long hair and great collar, and listened to his talking to her. Out of what circumstance in her childhood this curious belief may have arisen is a psychological conundrum which Tita and I have long ago given up; and Bell herself cannot even suggest any other celebrated person of the neighborhood who may, in her infancy, have produced a profound impression on her imagination, and caused her to construct a confused picture into which the noble figure of the old professor had somehow and subsequently been introduced; but none the less she asks us how it is that she can remember exactly the expression of his face and eyes as he looked down on her, and how even to this day she can recall the sense of awe with which she regarded him, even as he was trying to amuse her.

The lieutenant knew all about this story; and it was with a great interest that he went up to Elleray Cottage and saw the famous chestnut which Christopher North has talked of to the world. It was as if some relative of Bell's had lived in this place—some foster-father or grand-uncle who had watched her youth; and who does not know the strange curiosity with which a lover listens to stories of the childhood of his sweetheart or meets any one who knew her in those old and half-forgotten years? It seems a wonderful thing to him that he should not have known her then—that all the world at that time, so far as he knew, was unconscious of her magical presence; and he seeks to make himself familiar with her earliest years, to nurse the delusion that he has known her always, and that ever since her entrance into the world she has belonged to him. In like manner let two lovers who have known each other for a number of years begin to reveal to each other when the

first notion of love entered their mind: they will insensibly shift the date farther and farther back, as if they would blot out the pallid and colorless time in which they were stupid enough not to have found out their great affection for each other. The lieutenant was quite vexed that he knew little of Professor Wilson's works. He said he would get them all the moment that he went back to London; and when Bell, as we lingered about the grounds of Elleray, told him how that there was a great deal of Scotch in the books, and how the old man whom she vaguely recollected had written about Scotland, and how that she had about as great a longing, when she was buried away down south in the commonplaceness of London and Surrey, to smell the heather and see the lovely glens and the far-reaching sea-lakes of Scotland as to reach her own native Westmoreland, the lieutenant began to nurture thoughts of affection for Scotland, and wondered when we should get there.

I cannot describe in minute detail our day's ramble about Windermere. It was all a dream to us. Many years had come and gone since those of us who were familiar with the place had been there; and somehow, half unconsciously to ourselves, we kept trying to get away from the sight of new people and new houses, and to discover the old familiar features of the neighborhood that we had loved. Once or twice there was in Tita's eyes a moisture she could scarce conceal, and the light of gladness on Bell's bright face was preserved there chiefly through her efforts to instruct the lieutenant, which made her forget old memories. She was happy, too, in hitting on the old paths. When we went down from Elleray through the private grounds that lie along the side of the hill, she found no difficulty whatever in showing us how we were to get to the lake. She took us down through a close and sweet-smelling wood, where the sunlight only struggled at intervals through the innumerable stems and leaves, and lit up the brackens and other ferns and underwood. There was a stream running down close by, that

plashed and gurgled down its stony channel. As we got farther down the slope the darkness of the avenue increased; and then all at once, at the end of the trees, we came in sight of a blinding glare of white—the level waters of the lake.

And then, when we left the wood and stood on the shore, all the fair plain of Windermere lay before us, wind-swept and troubled, with great dashes of blue along its surface, and a breezy sky moving overhead. Near at hand there were soft green hills shining in the sunlight, and farther off long and narrow promontories piercing out into the water with their dark line of trees growing almost black against the silver glory of the lake. But then again the hurrying wind would blow away the shadow of the cloud; a beam of sunlight would run along the line of trees, making them glow green above the blue of the water; and from this moving and shifting and glowing picture we turned to the far and ethereal masses of the Langdale Pikes and the mountains above Ambleside, which changed as the changing clouds were blown over from the west.

We got a boat and went out into the wilderness of water and wind and sky. Now we saw the reedy shores behind us, and the clear and shallow water at the brink of which we had been standing receiving the troubled reflection of the woods. Out here the beautiful islands of Lady Holm, Thompson's Holm and Belle Isle were shimmering in green. Far up there in the north the slopes and gullies of the great mountains were showing a thousand hues of soft velvet-like grays and blues, and even warming up into a pale yellowish-green where a ray of the sunlight struck the lower slopes. Over by Furness Fells the clouds lay in heavier masses and moved slowly, but elsewhere there was a brisk motion over the lake, that changed its beauties even as one looked at them.

"Mademoiselle," observed the lieutenant, as if a new revelation had broken upon him, "all that you have said about your native country is true; and now I understand why that you did weary in

London and think very much of your own home."

Perhaps he thought, too, that there was but one county in England or in the world that could have produced this handsome, courageous, generous and right-minded English girl, for such are the exaggerations that lovers cherish.

We put into Bowness, and went up to the Crown Hotel there. In an instant—as rapidly as Alloway Kirk became dark when Tam o' Shanter called out—the whole romance of the day went clean out and was extinguished. How many of God's creatures could have come to dress themselves in such fashion, amid such scenery, our young Uhlan professed himself unable to tell; but here were men, apparently in their proper senses, wearing such comicalities of jackets and resplendent knickerbockers as would have made a harlequin blush, with young ladies tarred and feathered, as it were, with staring stripes and alarming petticoats and sailors' hats of straw. Why should the borders of a lake be provocative of these mad eccentricities? Who that has wandered about the neighborhood of Zurich, Lucerne and Thun does not know the wild freaks which Englishmen (far more than Englishwomen) will permit to themselves in dress? We should have fancied those gentlemen with the variegated knickerbockers had just come down from the Righi (by rail) if they had had alpenstocks and snow-spectacles with them; and indeed it was a matter for surprise that these familiar appurtenances were absent from the shores of Windermere.

My lady looked at the strange people rather askance.

"My dear," says Bell in an undertone, "they are quite harmless."

"Yes," continued the lieutenant, glancing up at the sign in front of the building, "it *is* a hotel. It is not an institution for the insane."

We had a luncheon in a corner of the great room. Dinner was already laid, and our plain meal seemed to borrow a certain richness from that long array of colored wine-glasses. Bell considered the sight rather pretty, but my lady be-

gan to wonder how much crystal the servants would have broken by the time we got back to Surrey. Then we went down to the lake again, stepped into a small steamer and stood out to sea.

It was now well on in the afternoon, and the masses of cloud that came rolling over from the west and south-west, when they clung to the summits of the mountains, threw a deeper shadow on the landscape beneath. Here and there, too, as the evening wore on, and we had steamed up within sight of the small island that is called Seamew Crag, we occasionally saw one of the great heaps of cloud get melted down into a gray mist that for a few minutes blotted out the side of a mountain. Meanwhile the sun had also got well up to the north-west, and as the clouds came over and swept about the peaks of Langdale a succession of the wildest atmospheric effects became visible. Sometimes a great gloom would overspread the whole landscape, and we began to anticipate a night of rain; then a curious saffron glow would appear behind the clouds; then a great smoke of gray would be seen to creep down the hill; and finally the sunlight would break through, shining on the retreating vapor and on the wet sides of the hills. Once or twice a light trail of cloud passed across the lake and threw a slight shower of rain upon us, but when we got to Ambleside the clouds had been for the most part driven by, and the clear heavens, irradiated by a beautiful twilight, tempted us to walk back to Windermere village by the road.

You may suppose that that was a pleasant walk for those two young folks. Everything had conspired to please Bell during the day, and she was in a dangerously amiable mood. As the dusk fell, and the white water gleamed through the trees by the margin of the lake, we walked along the winding road without meeting a solitary creature, and Queen Titania gently let our young friends get on ahead, so that we could only see the two dark figures pass underneath the dark avenues of trees.

"Did you ever see a girl more happy?" she says.

"Yes, once—at Eastbourne."

Tita laughs in a low, pleased way, for she is never averse to recalling those old days.

"I was very stupid then," she says.

That is a matter upon which she, of course, ought to be able to speak. It would be unbecoming to interfere with the right of private judgment.

"Besides," she remarks, audaciously, "I did not mean half I said. Don't you imagine I meant half what I said. It was all making fun, you know, wasn't it?"

"It has been deadly earnest since."

"Poor thing!" she says in the most sympathetic way; and there is no saying what fatal thunderbolt she might have launched had not her attention been called away just then.

For as we went along in the twilight it seemed to us that the old moss-covered wall was beginning to throw a slight shadow, and that the pale road was growing warmer in hue. Moved by the same impulse, we turned suddenly to the lake, and lo! out there beyond the trees, a great yellow glory was lying on the bosom of Windermere, and somewhere, hidden by the dark branches, the low moon had come into the clear violet sky. We walked on until we came to a clearance in the trees, and there, just over the opposite shore, the golden sickle lay in the heavens, the purple of which was suffused by the soft glow. It was a wonderful twilight. The ripples that broke in among the reeds down at the shore quivered in lines of gold, and a little bit farther out a small boat lay black as night in the path of the moonlight. The shadow cast by the wall grew stronger, and now the trees too cast black bars across the yellow road. The two lovers paid no heed to these things for a long time: they wandered on, engrossed in talk. But at length we saw them stop and turn toward the lake, while Bell looked back at us, with her face getting a faint touch of the glory coming over from the south.

All the jesting had gone out of Bell's face. She was as grave and gentle and thoughtful when we reached the two of

them as Undine was on the day after her marriage, and insensibly she drew near to Tita and took her away from us, and left the lieutenant and myself to follow. That young gentleman was as solemn as though he had swallowed the Longer Catechism and the Westminster Confession of Faith. He admitted that it was a beautiful evening. He made a remark about the scenery of the district which would have served admirably as a motto for one of those views that stationers put at the head of their notepaper. And then, with some abruptness, he asked what we should do if Arthur did not arrive in Kendal that night or next day.

"If Arthur does not come to-night, we shall probably have some dinner at the King's Arms. If he does not come in the morning, we may be permitted to take some breakfast. And then, if his staying away does not alter the position of Windermere, we shall most likely drive along this very road to-morrow forenoon. But why this solemn importance conferred on Arthur all of a sudden?"

"Oh, I cannot tell you."

"Nobody asked you."

"But I will give you a very good cigar, my dear friend."

"That is a great deal better, but let it be old and dry."

And so we got back to Windermere station and took train to Kendal. By the time we were walking up through the streets of the old town the moon had swam farther up into the heavens, and its light, now a pale silver, was shining along the fronts of the houses.

We went into the inn. No message from Arthur. A little flutter of dismay disturbs the women, until the folly of imagining all manner of accidents merely because an erratic young man takes a day longer to drive to Kendal than they had anticipated, is pointed out to them. Then dinner, and Bell appears in her prettiest dress, so that even Tita, when she comes into the room, kisses her, as if the girl had performed a specially virtuous action in merely choosing out of a milliner's shop a suitable color.

[*Note by Queen Titania.*—"I hope I am revealing no secrets, but it would be a great pity if any one thought that Bell was *heartless* or *indifferent*—a mistake that might occur when she is written about by one who makes a jest about *the most serious moments* in one's life. Now it was quite pitiable to see how the poor girl was troubled as we walked home that night by the side of Windermere. She as good as confessed to me—not in words, you know, for between women the least hint is *quite sufficient*, and saves a great deal of embarrassment—that she very much liked the lieutenant and admired his character, and that she was extremely vexed and sorry that she had been compelled to refuse him when he made her an offer. She told me, too, that he had pressed her not to make that decision final, and that she had admitted to him that it was really against her own wish that she had done so. But then she put it to me, as she had put it to him, what she would think of herself if she went and *betrayed* Arthur in this way. Really, I could not see any *betrayal* in the matter; and I asked her whether it would be fair to Arthur to marry him while she secretly would have preferred to marry another. She said she would try all in her power not to marry Arthur, if only he would be reconciled to her breaking with him; but then she immediately added, with an earnestness that I thought very *pathetic*, that if she treated Arthur badly, any other man might fairly expect her to treat him badly too; and if she could not satisfy herself that she had acted rightly throughout, she would not marry at all. It is a great pity I cannot show the readers of these few lines Bell's photograph, or they would see the *down-right absurdity* of such a resolve as that. To think of a girl like her not marrying is simply out of the question; but the danger at this moment was, that in one of these foolish fits of determination she would send the lieutenant away altogether. *Then* I think there might be a chance of her not marrying at all, for I am *greatly mistaken* if she does not care a good deal more for him than she will

acknowledge. I advised her to tell Arthur frankly how matters stand, but she seems afraid. Under any circumstances, he will be sure to discover the truth ; and then it will be far worse for him than

if she made a *full confession* just now, and got rid of all these perplexities and entanglements, which ought not to be throwing a cloud over a young face."]



PART VIII.

CHAPTER XXII.

ON CAVIARE AND OTHER MATTERS.

At the inn where we stopped he was exceedingly dissatisfied with some roast mutton which he had for dinner. The ladies, I saw, wondered to see the great philosopher, whose wisdom and wit they had been admiring all the way, get into ill-humor from such a cause.

"THERE is no paradise without its serpent," said my lady, with a sigh, as we were about to leave the white streets of Kendal for the green heart of the Lake district.

A more cruel speech was never made. Arthur, for aught we knew, might be lying smashed up in a Yorkshire ditch. He had not overtaken us even on the morning after our arrival in Kendal. No message had come from him. Was this a time to liken him to the Father of Lies, when perhaps the major's cob had taken him down a railway cutting or thrown him into a disused coalpit? What, for example, if his corpse had been brought into the King's Arms in which the above words were uttered? Would the lieutenant have spoken of him contemptuously as "a pitiful fellow—oh, a very pitiful fellow"? Would Bell have borne his presence with a meek and embarrassed resignation? or would Queen Tita have regarded the young man—who used to be a great friend of hers—as one intending to do her a deadly injury?

"Poor Arthur!" I say. "Whither have all thy friends departed?"

"At least, he does not want for an apologist," says Tita, with a little unnecessary fierceness.

"Perhaps thou art lying under two wheels in a peaceful glade. Perhaps thou art floating out to the ocean on the bosom of a friendly stream, with all the companions of thy youth unheeding—"

"Stuff!" says Queen Titania; and when I observe that I will address no further appeal to her, for that a lady who lends herself to match-making

abandons all natural instincts and is insensible to a cry for pity, she turns impatiently and asks what I have done with her eau-de-cologne, as if the fate of Arthur were of less importance to her than that trumpety flask.

Wherever the young man was, we could gain no tidings of him, and so we went forth once more on our journey. But as the certainty was that he had not passed us, how was it that Queen Titania feared the presence of this evil thing in the beautiful land before us?

"For," said the lieutenant, pretending he was quite anxious about the safety of the young man, and, on the whole, desirous of seeing him, "he may have gone to Carlisle, as he at first proposed, to meet us there."

"Oh, do you think so?" said Bell quite eagerly. Was she glad, then, to think that during our wanderings in her native county we should not be accompanied by that unhappy youth?

But the emotions which perplexed my lady's heart at this time were of the most curious sort. It was only by fits and snatches that the odd contradictions and intricacies of them were revealed. To begin with, she had a sneaking fondness for Arthur, begotten of old associations. She was vexed with him because he was likely to ruin her plan for the marriage of Bell and the lieutenant; and when Tita thought of this delightful prospect being destroyed by the interference of Arthur, she grew angry and regarded him as an unreasonable and officious young man, who ought to be sent about his business. Then, again, when she recalled our old evenings in Surrey, and the pleasant time the boy had in sweethearting with our Bonny Bell during the long and lazy afternoon walks, she was visited with remorse, and wished she could do something for him. But a claimant of this sort who represents an injury is certain, sooner or

later, to be regarded with dislike. He is continually reminding us that we have injured him, and disturbing our peace of mind. Sometimes Tita resented this claim (which was entirely of her own imagining) so strongly as to look upon Arthur as a perverse and wicked intermeddler with the happiness of two young lovers. So the world wags. The person who is inconvenient to us does us a wrong. At the very basis of our theatrical drama lies the principle, that non-success in a love-affair is criminal. Two young men shall woo a young woman: the one shall be taken, and the other made a villain because that he paid the girl the compliment of wanting to marry her; and justice shall not be satisfied until everybody has hounded and hunted this poor villain through all the phases of the play, until all the good people meet to witness discomfiture, and he is bidden to go away and be a rejected suitor no more.

It was only in one of these varying moods that Tita had shown a partial indifference to Arthur's fate. She was really concerned about his absence. When she took her seat in the phaeton she looked back and down the main thoroughfare of Kendal, half expecting to see the major's cob and a small dog-cart come driving along. The suggestion that he might have gone on to Penrith or Carlisle comforted her greatly. The only inexplicable circumstance was that Arthur had not written or telegraphed to Kendal, at which town he knew we were to stop.

About five minutes after our leaving Kendal, Arthur was as completely forgotten as though no such hapless creature was in existence. We were all on foot except Tita, who remained in the phaeton to hold the reins in a formal fashion. For about a mile and a half the road gradually rises, giving a long spell of collar-work to horses with weight to drag behind them. Tita, who weighs about a feather and a half, was commissioned to the charge of the phaeton, while the rest of us dawdled along the road, giving Castor and Pollux plenty of time. It was a pleasant walk. The

lieutenant—with an amount of hypocrisy of which I had not suspected him guilty—seemed to prefer to go by the side of the phaeton and talk to the small lady sitting enthroned there; but Bell, once on foot and in her native air, could not so moderate her pace. We set off up the hill. There was a scent of peat-reek in the air. A cool west wind was blowing through the tall hedges and the trees; and sudden shafts and gleams of sunlight fell from the uncertain sky and lit up the wild masses of weeds and flowers by the roadside. Bell pulled a white dog-rose, and kissed it as though a Westmoreland rose was an old friend she had come to see. She saw good jests in the idlest talk, and laughed; and all her face was aglow with delight as she looked at the beautiful country, and the breezy sky, and the blue peaks of the mountains that seemed to grow higher and higher the farther we ascended the hill.

"You silly girl!" I say to her when she is eager to point out cottages built of stone, and stone-walls separating small orchards from the undulating meadows, "do you think there are no stone cottages anywhere but in Westmoreland?"

"I didn't say there wasn't," she answers, regardless of grammar.

Yes, we were certainly in Westmoreland. She had scarcely uttered the words when a rapid pattering was heard among the trees, and presently a brisk shower was raining down upon us. Would she return to the phaeton for a shawl? No. She knew the ways of Westmoreland showers on such a day as this—indeed, she had predicted that some of the heavy clouds being blown over from the other side of Windermere would visit us in passing. In a few minutes the shower lightened, the wind that shook the heavy drops from the trees seemed to bring dryness with it, and presently a warm glow of sunshine sprang down upon the road, and the air grew sweet with resinous and fragrant smells.

"It was merely to lay the dust," said Bell, as though she had ordered the shower.

After you pass Rather Heath, you go

down into the valley of the Gowan. The road is more of a lane than a highway; and the bright and showery day added to the picturesqueness of the tall hedges and the wooded country on both sides by sending across alternate splashes of gloom and bursts of sunlight. More than once, too, the tail-end of a shower caught us, but we cared little for rain that had wind and sunlight on the other side of it; and Bell, indeed, rather rejoiced in the pictorial effects produced by changing clouds, when the sunshine caused the heavier masses to grow black and ominous, or shone mistily through the frail sheet produced by the thinner masses melting into rain.

Tita is a pretty fair driver in Surrey, where she knows every inch of the roads and lanes, and has nothing to distract her attention; but now, among these hilly and stony Westmoreland roads, her enjoyment of the bright panorama around her considerably drew her attention away from the horses' feet. Then she was sorely troubled by news that had reached us that morning from home. An evil-doer, whom she had hitherto kept in order by alternate bribes and threats, had broken out again and given his wife a desperate thrashing. Now this occurrence seldom happened except when both husband and wife were intoxicated; and for some time back my lady had succeeded in stopping their periodical bouts. With these evil tidings came the report that a horrible old creature of sixty—as arrant a rogue as ever went on crutches, although my lady would have taken the life of any one who dared to say so of one of her pets—had deliberately gone to Guildford and pawned certain pieces of flannel which had been given her to sew. In short, as Bell proceeded to point out, the whole neighborhood was in revolt. The chief administrator of justice and queen's almoner of the district was up here skylarking in a phaeton, while her subjects down in the South had broken out into flagrant rebellion. History tells of a Scotch parish that suddenly rose and hanged the minister, drowned the precentor and raffled the church bell: who

was now to answer for the safety of our most cherished parochial institutions when the guardian of law and order had withdrawn herself into the regions of the mountains?

"That revolt," it is observed, "is the natural consequence of tyranny. For years you have crushed down and domineered over that unhappy parish; and the unenfranchised millions, who had no more liberty than is vouchsafed to a stabled horse or a chained dog, have risen at last. *Mort aux tyrans!* Will they chase us, do you think, Bell?"

"I am quite convinced," remarked my lady deliberately and calmly, "that the poor old woman has done nothing of the kind. She could not do it. Why should she seek to gain a few shillings at the expense of forfeiting all the assistance she had to expect from me?"

"An independent peasantry is not to be bought over by pitiful bribes. 'Tis a free country; and the three balls ought to be placed among the insignia of royalty, instead of that meaningless sphere. Can any student of history now present explain the original purpose of that instrument?"

"I suppose," says Bell, "that Queen Elizabeth, who always has it in her hand, used to chastise her maid-servants with it."

"Wrong. With that weapon Henry VIII. was wont to strike down and murder the good priests that interfered with his unholy wishes."

"Henry VIII.—" says my lady; but just at this moment Castor caught a stone slightly with his foot, and the brief stumble caused my lady to mind her driving; so that Henry VIII., wherever he is, may be congratulated on the fact that she did not finish her sentence.

Then we ran pleasantly along the valley until we came in sight, once more, of Windermere. We drove round the foot of the green slopes of Elleray. We plunged into the wood, and there was all around us a moist odor of toadstools and fern. We went by St. Catherine's and over Troutbeck Bridge, and cut down to the lake-side by Ecclelrigg House and Lowood. It was along this

road that our Bell and her companion had walked the night before, when the yellow moon rose up in the south and threw a strange light over Windermere. The lieutenant had said not a word about the results of that long interview, but they had clearly not been unfavorable to him, for he had been in excellent good spirits during the rest of the evening, and now he was chatting to Bell as if nothing had occurred to break the even tenor of their acquaintanceship. They had quite resumed their old relations, which was a blessing to the two remaining members of the party. Indeed, there was no bar now placed upon Bell's singing except her own talking; and when a young lady undertakes to instruct her elders in the history, traditions, manners, customs and peculiarities of Westmoreland, she has not much time for strumming on a guitar. Bell acted the part of *valet de place* to perfection, and preached at us just as if we were all as great strangers as the lieutenant was. It is true our guide was not infallible. Sometimes we could see that she was in deep distress over the names of the peaks up in the neighborhood of the Langdale Pikes; but what did it matter to us which was Scawfell and which was Bowfell, or which was Great Gable and which Great End? We had come to enjoy ourselves, not to correct the ordnance survey maps.

"I am afraid," said my lady, when some proposal to stop at Ambleside and climb Wansfell Pike had been unanimously rejected, "that we have been throughout this journey disgracefully remiss. We have gone to see nothing that we ought to have seen. We have never paid any attention to ancient ruins or galleries of pictures or celebrated monuments. We have not climbed a single mountain. We went past Woodstock without looking in at the gates; we did not even go to see the obelisk on Evesham Plain—"

"That was because some of you drove the horses the wrong way," it is remarked.

"Indeed we have done nothing that we ought to have done."

"Perhaps, madame," said the lieutenant, "that is why the voyage has been so pleasant to us. One cannot always be instructing one's self, like a tourist."

If you wish to vex my lady, call her a tourist. This subtle compliment of the lieutenant pleased her immensely, but I confess myself unable to see in what respect we were not tourists, except that we were a little more ignorant, and indifferent to our ignorance, than holiday travelers generally are. What tourist, for example, would have done such a barbaric thing as go through Ambleside without stopping a day there?

That was all along of Bell, however, who insisted on our spending the treasure of our leisure time upon Grasmere; and who was strengthened in her demands by my lady when she came in view of a considerable number of unmistakable tourists lounging about the former town. The poor men were for the most part dressed as mountaineers; otherwise they were quite harmless. They were loitering about the main thoroughfare of Ambleside, with their hands in the pockets of their knickerbockers, gazing in at a stationer's window, or regarding a brace of setters that a keeper standing in front of a hotel had in leash. They did not even look narrowly at the knees of our horses—an ordinary piece of polite impertinence. They were well-meaning and well-conducted persons; and the worst that could be said of them, that they were tourists, has been said about many good and respectable people. A man may have climbed Loughrigg Fell, and yet be an attentive husband and an affectionate father; while knickerbockers in themselves are not an indictable offence. My lady made no answer to these humble representations, but asked for how long the horses would have to be put up before we started again.

Bell's enthusiasm of the morning had given way to something of disappointment, which she tried hard to conceal. Ambleside, one of the places she had been dreaming about for years, looked painfully modern now. In thinking about it down in our southern home,

she had shut out of the picture hotels, shops and fashionably-dressed people, and had dwelt only on the wild and picturesque features of a neighborhood that had at one time been as familiar to her as her mother's face. But now Amble-side seemed to have grown big and new and strange, and she lost the sense of proprietorship which she had been exhibiting in our drive through the scenery of the morning. Then Loughrigg Fell did us an evil turn—gathering up all the clouds that the wind had driven over, and sending them gently and persistently down into the valley of the Rothay, so that a steady rain had set in. The lieutenant did not care much how the sky might be clouded over, so long as Bell's face remained bright and happy; but it was quite evident she was disappointed, and he in vain attempted to reassure her by declaring that these two days had convinced him that the Lake country was the most beautiful in the world. She could not foresee then that this very gloom, that seemed to mean nothing but constant rain, would procure for us that evening by far the most impressive sight that we encountered during the whole of our long summer ramble.

Our discontent with Loughrigg Fell took an odd turn when it discharged itself upon the duke of Wellington. We had grown accustomed to that foolish picture of the Waterloo heroes, in which the duke, in a pair of white pantaloons, stands in the attitude of a dancing-master, with an idiotic simper on his face. All along the road, in public-houses, inns and hotels, we had met this desperate piece of decoration on the walls, and had only smiled a melancholy smile when we came upon another copy. But this particular print seemed to be quite offensively ridiculous. If Henry VIII. had been inside those long white pantaloons and that tight coat, my lady could not have regarded the figure with a severer contempt. We picked out enemies among the attendant generals, just as one goes over an album of photographs and has a curious pleasure in recording mental likes and dislikes pro-

duced by unknown faces. Somehow all the Waterloo heroes on this evening looked stupid and commonplace. It seemed a mercy that Napoleon was beaten, but how he had been beaten by such a series of gabies and nincompoops none of us could make out.

Then the lieutenant must needs grumble at the luncheon served up to us. It was a good enough luncheon, as hotels go; and even my lady was moved to express her surprise that a young man who professed himself able to enjoy anything in the way of food, and who had told us amusing stories of his foraging adventures in campaigning time, should care whether there were or were not lemon and bread-crumbs with a mutton cutlet.

"Madame," said the lieutenant, "that is very well in a campaign, and you are glad of anything; but there is no merit in eating badly-cooked food—none at all."

"A soldier should not mind such trifles," she said; but she smiled as though to say that she agreed with him all the same.

"Well, I think," said the young man doggedly, "that is no shame that any one should know what is good to eat, and that it is properly prepared. It is not any more contemptible than dressing yourself in good taste, which is a duty you owe to other people. You should see our old generals—who are very glad of some coarse bread and a piece of sausage and a tumbler of sour wine when they are riding across a country in the war—how they study delicate things and scientific cookery, and all that, in Berlin."

"And do you follow their example when you are at home?"

"Not always—I have not enough time. But when you come to my house in Berlin, madame, you will see what luncheon you shall have."

"Can't you tell us about it now?" says Tita.

"Pray do," echoes Bell, after casting another reproachful glance at the rain out of doors.

The lieutenant laughed, but seeing

that the women were quite serious, he proceeded in a grave and solemn manner to instruct them in the art of preparing luncheon. "First," said he, "you must have Russian black bread and French white bread cut into thin slices, but you do not use the black bread yet a while; and you must have some good Rhine wine, a little warmed if it is in the winter; some Bordeaux, a bottle of green Chartreuse, and some champagne if there are ladies. Now, for the first, you take a slice of the white bread, you put a little butter on it, very thin, and then you open a pot of real Russian caviare, and you put that on the slice of bread three-quarters of an inch thick—not less than that. You must not taste it by little and little, as all English ladies do, but eat it boldly, and you will be grateful. Then half a glass of soft Rhine wine: if it is a good Marcobrunner, that is excellent. Then you eat one slice of the black bread, with butter on it more thick than on the white bread. Then you have two, perhaps three, Norwegian anchovies—"

"Would you mind my writing these things down?" says my lady.

The lieutenant of course assents: she produces a small bunch of ivory tablets, and I know the horrible purpose that fills her mind as she proceeds to jot down this programme.

"You must have the caviare and the anchovies of real quality, or everything is spoiled. With the anchovies you may eat the black bread or the white, but I think without butter. Then half a glass of Rhine wine—"

"These half-glasses of Rhine wine are coming in rather often," remarks Bell.

"No, mademoiselle, that is the last of the Rhine wine. Next is a thin slice of white bread, very thin butter, and a very thin slice of Bologna sausage. This is optional—"

"My dear," I say to Tita, "be sure you put down '*This is optional.*'"

"With it you have a glass of good and soft Bordeaux wine. Then, madame, we come to the reindeer's tongue. This is the *pièce de résistance*, and your guests must eat of it just as they have

their hour for dinner in the evening. Also, if they are ladies, they may prefer a sparkling wine to the Bordeaux, though the Bordeaux is much better. And this is the reason: After the reindeer's tongue is taken away, and you may eat an olive or two, then a *pâté-de-foie-gras*—real from Strasburg—"

"Stop!" cries one of the party. "If I have any authority left, I forbid the addition to that disastrous catalogue of another single item. I will not suffer their introduction into the house. Away with them!"

"But, my dear friend," says the lieutenant, "it is a good thing to accustom yourself to eat the meats of all countries: you know not where you may find yourself."

"Yes," says Bell gently, "one ought to learn to like caviare, lest one should be thrown on a desert island."

"And why not?" says the persistent young man. "You are thrown on a desert island, you catch a sturgeon, you take the roe, and you know how to make very good caviare—"

"But how about the half-glass of Rhine wine?" says my lady.

"You cannot have everything in a desert island; but in a town, where you have time to study such things—"

"And where you can order coffins for half-past ten," it is suggested.

"—A good luncheon is a good thing."

"Ladies and gentlemen," said Bell, "the rain has ceased."

And so it had. While we had been contemplating that imaginary feast and paying no attention to the changes out of doors, the clouds had gradually withdrawn themselves up the mountains, and the humid air showed no more slanting lines of rain. But still overhead there hung a heavy gloom, and along the wet woods, and on the troubled bosom of the lake, and up the slopes of the hills there seemed to lie an ominous darkness. Should we reach Grasmere in safety? The lieutenant had the horses put to with all speed; and presently Bell was taking us at a rapid pace into the wooded gorge that lies between Nab Scar and Loughrigg Fell, where the gathering twi-

light seemed to deepen with premonitions of a storm.

CHAPTER XXIII.

AT NIGHT ON GRASMERE.

Ye who have yearned
With too much passion, will here stay and pity,
For the mere sake of truth; as 'tis a ditty
Not of these days, but long ago 'twas told
By a cavern wind unto a forest old;
And then the forest told it in a dream
To a sleeping lake.

WE drove into the solitude of this deep valley without uttering a word. How could we tell what this strange gloom and silence might portend? Far away up the misty and rounded slopes of Loughrigg the clouds lay heavy and thick, and over the masses of Rydal Fell, on the other side of the gorge, an ominous darkness brooded. Down here in the chasm the trees hung cold and limp in the humid air, crushed by the long rain. There was no sign of life abroad, only that we heard the rushing of the river Rothay in among the underwood in the channel of the stream. There was not even any motion in that wild and gloomy sky, that looked all the stranger that the storm-clouds did not move.

But as we drove on it seemed to become less likely that the rain would set in again. The clouds had got banked up in great billows of vapor, and underneath them we could see, even in the twilight, the forms of the mountains with a strange distinctness. The green of the distant slopes up there grew more and more intense, strengthened as it was by long splashes of a deep purple where the slate was visible: then the heavy gray of the sky weighing upon the summits of the hills.

But all this was as nothing to the wild and gloomy scene that met our view when we came in sight of Rydal Water. We scarcely knew the lake we had loved of old, in bright days and in sunshine and blowing rain. Here, hidden away among reeds, lay a long stretch of dark slate-blue, with no streak of white along the shores, no ripple off the crags, to show that it was water. So perfect was

the mirror-like surface that it was impossible to say in the gathering gloom where the lake ended and the land began. The islands, the trees, the fields and the green spaces of the hills were as distinct below as above, and where the dark blue of the lake ran in among the reeds no one could make out the line of the shore. It was a strange and impressive scene, this silent lake lying at the foot of the hills, and so calm and deathlike that the motionless clouds of the sky lay without a tremor on the sheet of glass. This was not the Rydal Water we had been hoping to see, but a solitary and enchanted lake, struck silent and still by the awful calmness of the twilight and the presence of the lowering clouds.

We got down from the phaeton. The horses were allowed to walk quietly on, with Tita in charge, while we sauntered along the winding road by the side of this sombre sheet of water. There was no more fear of rain. There was a firmness about the outlines of the clouds that became more marked as the dusk fell. But although the darkness was coming on apace, we did not hasten our steps much. When should we ever again see such a picture as this, the like of which Bell, familiar with the sights and sounds of the district from her childhood, had never seen before?

What I have written above conveys nothing of the impressive solemnity and majesty of this strange sight as we saw it; and indeed I had resolved, before entering the Lake district, to leave out of the jottings of a mere holiday traveler any mention of scenes which have become familiar to the world through the imperishable and unapproachable descriptions of the great masters who lived and wrote in these regions. But such jottings must be taken for what they are worth, the hasty record of hasty impressions; and how could our little party have such a vision vouchsafed to them without at least noting it down as an incident of their journey?

We walked on in the larkness. The slopes of Nab Scar had become invisible. Here and there a white cottage glimmered out from the roadside, and

Bell knew the name of every one of them, and of the people who used to occupy them.

"How surprised some of our friends would be," she said to Tita, "if we were to call on them to-night, and walk in without saying a word!"

"They would take you for a banshee," said my lady, "on such an evening as this. Get up, Bell, and let us drive on. I am beginning to shiver—whether with fright or with cold I don't know."

So we got into the phaeton again, and sent the horses forward. We drove along the broad road which skirts the reedy and shallow end of Rydal Water, and entered the valley of the stream which comes flowing through the trees from Grasmere. It was now almost dark, and the only sound we could hear was that of the stream plashing along its rocky bed. By and by a glimmer of yellow light was observed in front, and Bell having announced that this was the Prince of Wales Hotel, we were soon within its comfortable precincts. In passing we had got a glimpse of a dark steel-gray lake lying amid gray mists and under sombre hills: that was all we knew as yet of Grasmere.

But about an hour afterward, when we had dined, the lieutenant came back from the window at which he had been standing for a minute or two, and said, "Mademoiselle, I have a communication for you."

Mademoiselle looked up.

"If you will go to the window—"

Bell rose and went directly.

"I know," said my lady with a well-affected sigh. "The night has cleared up: there is starlight or moonlight, or something, and I suppose we shall have to go out in a boat to please these foolish young people. But I think you will be disappointed this time, Count von Rosen."

"Why, madame?"

"This is a respectable hotel. Do you think they would give you a boat? Now if there was some old lady to be cajoled, I dare say you would succeed—"

"Oh, you do think we cannot get a boat? I do not suppose there is any

trouble about that, if only mademoiselle cares about going on the lake. Perhaps she does not; but you must see how beautiful is this lake at present."

The idea of Bell not wishing to go out on Grasmere at any hour of the night, so long as there was a yellow moon rising over the dusky heights of Silver Home! The girl was all in a flutter of delight when she returned from the window, anxious that we should all see Grasmere under these fine conditions, just as if Grasmere belonged to her. And the lieutenant, having gone outside for a few minutes, returned with the information that a boat was waiting for us. There was no triumph in his face, no exultation; and it never occurred to any one to ask whether this Uhlán had secured the boat by throwing the owner of it into the lake. The women were quite satisfied to accept all the pleasant things he brought them, and never stopped to inquire by what tyrannical or disgraceful means the young Prussian had succeeded in his fell endeavors. But at all events he managed to keep out of the police-office.

As a matter of fact, the boat was not only waiting when Tita and Bell, having dressed for the purpose, came down stairs, but was supplied with all manner of nice cushions, plaids, rugs and a guitar-case. The women showed a good deal of trepidation in stepping into the frail craft, which lay under the shadow of a small jetty, but once out in the open lake, we found sufficient light around us, and Bell, pulling her gray and woolen shawl more tightly around her, turned to look at the wonders of Grasmere which she had not seen for many years.

It was a pleasant night. All the mountains and woods on the other side of the lake seemed for the most part in a black shadow, but out here the moonlight dwelt calmly on the water, and lit up the wooded islands farther down, and shone along the level shores. As we went out into the silent plain the windows of the hotel grew smaller and smaller, until in the distance we could see them but as minute points of orange fire that glittered down on the black surface below. Then,

in the perfect stillness of the night, as the measured sound of the rowlocks told of our progress and the moonlight shone on the gleaming blades of the oars, we were all at once startled by a loud and hissing noise that caused Tita to utter a slight cry of alarm.

We had run into a great bed of water-weeds, that was all—a tangled mass of water-lily leaves, with millions of straight horsetails rising from the shallow lake. We pushed on. The horsetails went down before the prow of the boat, but all around us the miniature forest remained erect. The moonlight sparkled on the ripples that we sent circling out through those perpendicular lines. And then the lieutenant called out a note of warning, and Bell plunged her oars in the water just in time, for we had nearly run down two swans that were fast asleep in among the tall weeds.

We forsook this shallower end of the lake, and, with some more hissing of horsetails, pushed out and into the world of moonlight and still water; and then, as Tita took the oars and just dipped them now and again to give us a sense of motion, Bell rested her guitar on her knee and began to sing to us. What should she sing under the solitude of the hills, when all our laughter of dinner-time was over and we were as silent as the lake itself? There was not even a breath of wind stirring; and it was in a very low voice, with something of a tremor in it, that Bell began to accompany the faint touching of the guitar.

I've heard the liltin' at our ewe-milkin',
she sang, and her voice was so low and tremulous that Tita forgot to dip the oars into the water, that she might listen to the girl:

Lasses a-liltin' before the break o' day,
But now they are moaning on ilka green loanin'—
The Flowers o' the Forest are a' wede away."

Had Grasmere ever listened to a more pathetic ballad or to a tenderer voice? It was as well, perhaps, that the lieutenant could not see Bell's face, for as she sang the last verse—

We hear nae mair liltin' at our ewe-milkin';
Women and bairns are heartless and wae;
Sighin' and moaning on ilka green loanin'—
The Flowers o' the Forest are a' wede away—

there was a sort of indistinctness in her notes; and when the lieutenant said that it was the finest English song that he had yet heard, and that the air was so very different from most of the old English tunes, she could not answer him for a minute or two.

But when she did answer him, fancy our astonishment! "It isn't English," she said, with just a trace of contempt in her tone. "When did you find the English able to write a song or an air like that?"

"Grant me patience!" cries my lady, with a fine theatrical appeal to the moonlight overhead. "This girl, because she was born in Westmoreland, claims the possession of everything north of the Trent."

"Are not you also English, mademoiselle?" says the lieutenant.

"I belong to the North Country," says Bell proudly; "and we are all the same race up here."

Now you should have seen how this cue was seized by the lieutenant. The boy had about as much knowledge of the colonization of this country as most youths pick up at schools, but the manner in which he twisted it about to suit the wild and audacious statement that Bell had uttered was truly alarming. Before we knew where we were, we were plunged into the history of Strathclyde, and invited to consider the consistency of character that must have prevailed in the great Welsh kingdom that stretched from Dumbarton to Chester. We had also some pleasant little excursions into Bernicia and Deira, with abundance of proof that the Lowland Scotch speak the best English now going—a piece of information which we accepted with meekness. We were treated to a recapitulation of the settlements of the Angles, together with a learned disquisition on the aims of Ida. This was all very well. It passed the time. Bell thought she was firmly established in her position. Her traditional reverence for the "North Country" and all its belongings had, it turned out, some definite historical justification. She had a right to claim the songs of the Lowland Scotch: was she not herself

of that favored race? At length Queen Tita burst into a merry fit of laughter. "I don't know what you mean to prove, Count von Rosen," she said, "you prove so much. At one time you insist that Bell is Scotch: at another time you show us that she must be Welsh, if all the people in Strathclyde were Welsh. But look at her, and what becomes of all the theories? There is no more English girl in all England than our Bell."

"That is no harm said of her," replied the lieutenant, abandoning all his arguments at once.

"I suppose I am English," said Bell obstinately, "but I am North Country English."

Nobody could dispute that; and doubtless the lieutenant considered that Bell's division of the realm into districts mapped out in her imagination was of much more importance than the idle inquiries of historians into the German occupation of England.

Then we pulled away over to the island, and round underneath the shadows of its firs, and back through the clear moonlight to the small jetty of the hotel. We entered the warm and comfortable building. The folks who had been dining had all gone into the drawing-room, but neither my lady nor Bell seemed inclined to venture in among the strangers; and so we got hold of a private sitting-room, in which, by good luck, there was a piano.

The lieutenant sat down. "Madame," he said, "what shall I play to you? It is not since that I was at Twickenham I have touched a piano. Oh, that is very bad English, I know, but I cannot help it."

"Sing the *rataplän* song that Bell was humming the other day," said Tita. "You two shall sing it: you shall be the old sergeant, and Bell the daughter of the regiment."

"Yes, I can sing it," he said, "but to play it, that I cannot do. It is too fine for my thick fingers."

And so he gave way to Bell, who played the accompaniment dexterously enough, and sang with a will. You would have fancied that the camp was really

her birthplace, and that she was determined to march with the foremost, as the good song says. The lieutenant had not half the martial ardor of the girl, who was singing of fire and slaughter, of battle and sudden death, as though she had been the eldest daughter of one the kings of her native Strathclyde. And then, when she had finished that performance, it needed only the least suggestion of the lieutenant to get her to sing Maria's next song, "Ciascun lo dice," so that you would have thought she had the spirit of the whole regiment within her. It is not a proper song. The brave Eleventh was doubtless a very gallant regiment, but why should they have taught their daughter to glorify their frightening of landlords, their flirtations, their fierce flying hither and thither, like the famous Jägers that followed Holk? This is the regiment, Maria tells you, that fears nothing, but whom all men fear. This is the regiment beloved of women, for is not each soldier sure to become a field-marshal? The lieutenant laughed at the warlike glow of her singing, but he was mightily pleased, for all that. She was fit to be a soldier's wife—this girl with the mantling color in her cheek, and the brave voice, and gallant mien. With colors in her cap and a drum slung round her neck—with all the fathers of the regiment petting her, and proud of her, and ready to drive the soul out of the man who spoke a rude word to her—with her arch ways, and her frank bearing, and her loyal and loving regard for the brave Eleventh,—why, Bell, for the moment, was really Maria, and as bright and as fearless as any Maria that ever sang "*rataplän*." Queen Tita was pleased too, but she was bound to play the part of the stately marchioness. With an affectionate pat on the shoulder, she told Bell she mustn't sing any more of these soldier-songs—they were not improving songs. With which—just as if she had been ordered by the marchioness to leave the brave Eleventh—Bell began to sing the plaintive and touching "*Convien partir*." Perhaps we may have heard it better sung at Drury Lane—the seug is known

in Covent Garden—but if you had heard Bell sing it this night, with her lover sitting quite silent and embarrassed with a shame-faced pleasure, and with a glimmer of moonlight on Grasmere visible through the open window, you might have forgiven the girl for her mistakes.

Perhaps a notion may have crossed my lady's mind that it was very hard on Arthur that Bell should in his absence have been singing these soldier-songs with so much obvious enjoyment. Was it fair that this young Uhlan should flutter his martial scarlet and blue and gold before the girl's eyes, and dazzle her with romantic pictures of a soldier's life? What chance has the poor law-student, coming out from his dingy chambers in the Temple, with bewildered eyes and pale face and the funeral costume of the ordinary English youth? We know how girls are attracted by show, how their hearts are stirred by the passing of a regiment with music playing and colors flying. The padded uniform may enclose a nutshell sort of heart, and the gleaming helmet or the imposing busby may surmount the feeblest sort of brain that could with decency have been put within a human skull; but what of that? Each feather-bed warrior who rides from Knightsbridge to Whitehall, and from Whitehall to Knightsbridge, is gifted with the glorious traditions of great armies and innumerable campaigns, and in a ball-room the ass in scarlet is a far more attractive spectacle than the wise man in black. Perhaps Arthur was not the most striking example that might have been got to add point to the contrast; but if any such thoughts were running through Queen Tita's mind, you may be sure that her sympathies were awakened for a young man whose chances of marrying Bell were becoming more and more nebulous.

And then my lady sat down to the piano and condescended to play for us a few pieces, with a precision and a delicacy of fingering which were far removed from Bell's performances in that way. I suppose you young fellows who read this

would have regarded with indifference the dark-eyed little matron who sat there and unraveled the intricacies of the most difficult music. You would have kept all your attention for the girl who stood beside her; and you would have preferred the wilder and less finished playing of Bell, simply because she had fine eyes, pretty hair, a wholesome English pleasantness and frankness and a proud and gracious demeanor. But a few years hence you may come to know better. You may get to understand the value of the quiet and unobtrusive ways of a woman who can look after a household, and busy herself with manifold charities, and bring up her children well and scrupulously, and yet have a tender smile for the vagaries of young folks like yourselves. And then, if it is your excellent fortune to have with you so gentle and fearless and honest a companion—if your own life seems to be but the half of the broader and fuller existence that abides beneath your roof—you may do worse than go down on your knees and thank God who has blessed your house with the presence of a good wife and a good mother.

Tales shall not be told out of school. We may have sat a little late that night. We were harming no one by so doing, except ourselves; and if our health suffered by such late hours, we were prepared to let it suffer. For the fact was, we drifted into talk about our Surrey home; and now that seemed so far away, and it seemed so long since we had been there, that the most ordinary details of our bygone days of life in the South had grown picturesque. And from that Tita began to recall the names of the people she had known in the Lake district, in the old town, when Bell was but a girl running about the valleys and hillsides like a young goat. That, too, carried us back a long way, until it seemed as if we had drifted into a new generation of things that knew nothing of the good old times that were. There was a trifle of regret imported into this conversation—why, no one could tell; but when we broke up for the night Tita's face was rather saddened, and

she did not follow Bell when the girl called to her to look at the beautiful night outside, where the rapidly-sinking moon had given place to a host of stars that twinkled over the black gulf of Grasmere.

It is no wonder that lovers love the starlight and the infinite variety and beauty and silence of the strange darkness. But folks who have got beyond that period do not care so much to meet the mystery and the solemnity of the night. They may have experiences they would rather not recall. Who can tell what bitterness and grievous heart-wrings are associated with the wonderful peace and majesty of the throbbing mid-night sky? The strong man, with all his strength fled from him, has gone out in his utter misery and cried, "O God, save my wife to me!" And the young mother, with her heart breaking, has looked up into the great abyss and cried, "O God, give me back my baby!" and all the answers they have had were the silence of the winds and the faint and distant glimmer of the stars. They do not care any more to meet the gaze of those sad and calm and impenetrable eyes.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ARTHUR'S SONG.

Along the grass sweet airs are blown

Our way this day in spring.

Of all the songs that we have known,

Now which one shall we sing?

Not that, my love, ah no!—

Not this, my love, why, so!—

Yet both were ours, but hours will come and go.

* * * * *

The branches cross above our eyes,

The skies are in a net;

And what's the thing beneath the skies

We two would most forget?

Not birth, my love, no, no—

Not death, my love, no, no.

The love once ours, but ours long hours ago.

WE stood at the open window, my lady, Bell and I, with the calm lake lying before us as darkly blue as the heart of a bell-flower, and with the hills on the other side grown gray and green and hazy in the morning sunlight. Bell had brought us thither. The lieutenant was

outside, and we could hear him talking to some one, although he had no idea of our presence. Was it fair to steal a march on the young fellow, and seek to learn something of a method by which he became familiarly acquainted with every man, woman and child we met on our journey? In such matters I look to Tita for guidance. If she says a certain thing is proper, it is proper. And at this moment she was standing just inside the curtains, listening with a great amusement on her face to the sounds which reached us from below:

"Ay, ah wur born in eighteen hunder—that's a long time ago—a long time ago," said a quavering old voice, that was sometimes interrupted by a fit of asthmatic coughing; "and you don't remember the great comet—the comet of eighteen hunder an' eleven? No! See that now! And ah wur a boy at that time, but I can remember the great comet of eighteen hunder an' eleven: I remember it well, now; and ah wur born in eighteen hunder. How long ago is that, now?"

"Why, that's easily counted," said the lieutenant: "that's seventy-one years ago. But you look as hale and as fresh as a man of forty."

"Seventy-one—ay, that it is—and you don't remember the comet of eighteen hunder an' eleven?"

"No, I don't. But how have you kept your health and your color all this time? That is the air of the mountains gives you this good health, I suppose."

"Lor bless ye! ah don't belong to these parts. No. Ah wur born in the New Forest, in eighteen hunder. Ringwood, that's the place—that's in the New Forest, a long way from ear. Do ye know Ringwood?"

"No."

"Nor Poole?"

"No."

"Lor bless ye! Never been to Poole? Do you know Southampton?"

"No."

"Bless my soul! Never been to Poole? There now! And you don't know Southampton, where all the ships are?—ay, a famous sight o' ships, I can tell ye. And

you've never been to Southampton? Lor bless ye! you ain't much of a traveler! But there now, ain't you a Frenchman?"

"No."

"Go along with you! Not a Frenchman? An' you don't know Poole? It's a big place, Poole, and ah reckon it's grown bigger now, for it's many a year ago since ah wur there. When ah wur a boy—that's many a year ago—for ah remember well the great comet-year of eighteen hunderd an' eleven—you don't remember that? No! God bless my soul! you're only a boy yet—and ah wur born seventy year ago—and when ah went up to Lunnon ah wur such a simple chap!"

We could hear the old man laughing and chuckling, until a fit of coughing seized him, and then he proceeded: "Ah wur taking a bridle down to my mahster; and what's the bridge you go over? Dear me, dear me! my memory isn't as good as it once was—"

And at this point the old man stopped, and puzzled and hesitated about the name of the bridge until the lieutenant besought him never to mind that, but to go on with his story. But no. He would find out the name of the bridge; and after having repeated twenty times that he was born in 1800, and could remember the comet of 1811, he hit upon the name of Blackfriars.

"An' there wur a chap standin' there as come up to me and asked me if I would buy a silk handkerchief from him. He had two of 'em. Lor bless ye! you don't know what rare good handkerchiefs we had then—white, you know, wi' blue spots on 'em: they're all gone out now, for it's many a year ago. And that chap he thought ah'd bin sellin' a oss; and he made up to me, and he took me into a small public-'ouse close by, and says he, 'Ah'll be sworn a smart young fellow like you 'll 'ave a tidy bit o' money in your pocket.' An' ah wur a smart young fellow then, as he said, but, God bless you! that's many a year ago; an' now—would you believe it?—that chap got five shillin's out o' me for two of his handkerchiefs: he did in-

deed, as sure as I'm alive. Wasn't it a shame to take in a poor country-chap as wur up doing a job for his mahster?"

"Five shillings for two silk handkerchiefs with blue spots?" said the lieutenant. "Why, it was you who did swindle that poor man. It is you that should be ashamed. And you took away the bridle safe?"

"Ay, ah wur goin' down to Winchester. Do you know Winchester?"

"No."

"Ha, ha, ha! Ah thought not! No, nor Poole? Have you ever been to Bristol? There now!"

"My dear friend, there are few men so great travelers as you have been. You should not boast of it."

"But, Lor bless ye! don't ye know the ships at Poole? And Winchester? That's a fine town, too, is Winchester. Ah'd a month at Winchester when ah wur a young man."

"A month! What do you mean by that?"

"Yes, that ah did. Lor! they were far stricter then than they are now."

"But what was this month you are speaking about?"

"Don't ye know what a month in jail is for ketchin' a rabbit?"

"Oh, it was a rabbit, was it?"

The wicked old man laughed and chuckled again. "Ay," said he, "ah got one month for ketchin' one rabbit, but if they'd 'ave gi'en me a month for every rabbit and hare as ah've ketched—Lor bless ye! you young fellows now-a-days know nothin'! You're simple chaps, that's what it is! Have you ever heard of the great comet of eighteen hunderd an' eleven! There now! And the crowds as come out to see it—stretchin' out—long—jest as it might be the long gown as mothers put on young things when they're carried about; and that wur in eighteen hunderd an' eleven. But I'm gettin' old now, and stiff, and them rheumatics they do trouble one so when they come on bad in the night-time. I'm not what I was at your age. You'll be thirty now, or forty mayhap?"

"Nearer thirty."

"Ah never 'ad so much hair as you

it wur never the fashion to wear hair on the face at that time."

"And you followed the fashion, of course, when you were a young fellow, and went courting the girls."

This hint seemed to wake up the old man into a high state of glee; and as he began to tell of his exploits in this direction, he introduced so many unnecessary ejaculations into his talk that my lady somewhat hastily withdrew, dragging Bell with her. The old rogue outside might have been with our army in Flanders, to judge by the force of his conversation; and the stories that he told of his wild adventures in such distant regions as Poole and Southampton showed that his memory treasured other recollections than that of the 1811 comet. How the conversation ended I do not know, but by and by Von Rosen came in to breakfast.

It is a shame for two women to have a secret understanding between them, and look as if they could scarcely keep from smiling, and puzzle a bashful young man by enigmatical questions.

"Madame," said the lieutenant at last, "I am very stupid. I cannot make out what you mean."

"And neither can she," observes one who hates to see a worthy young man bothered by two artful women. "Her joke is like the conundrum that was so good that the man who made it, after trying for two years and a half to find out what it meant, gave it up and cut his throat. Don't you heed them. Cut the salad, like a good fellow, and let Bell put in the oil and the vinegar and what not. Now if that girl would only take out a patent for her salad-dressing, we should all be rolling in wealth directly."

"I should call it the Nebuchadnezzar," said Bell.

My lady pretended not to hear that remark, but she was very angry, and all desire of teasing the lieutenant had departed from her face, which was serious and reserved. Young people must not play pranks with Scripture names, in however innocent a fashion.

"It is a very good thing to have salad

at breakfast," said the lieutenant, "although it is not customary in your country. It is very fresh, very pleasant, very wholesome in the morning. Now, if one were to eat plenty of salad, and live in this good mountain-air, one might live a long time—"

"One might live to remember the comet of eighteen hundred an' eleven," observed Bell, with her eyes cast down.

The lieutenant stared for a moment, and then he burst into a roar of laughter. "I have discovered the joke," he cried. "It is that you did listen to that old man talking to me. Oh, he was a very wicked old person—"

And here, all at once, Von Rosen stopped. A great flush of red sprang to the young fellow's face: he was evidently contemplating with dismay the possibility of my lady having overheard all the dragoon-language of the old man.

"We heard only up to a certain point," says madame sedately. "When he began to be excited, Bell and I withdrew."

The lieutenant was greatly relieved. The septuagenarian was not a nice person for ladies to listen to. Indeed, in one direction he was amply qualified to have written a "Dialogue between a Man and a Cat: being a discussion as to which would like to use the most bad language when the tail of the latter is trodden upon." Such an essay would be instructive in results, but objectionable in tone.

All this while we had heard nothing of Arthur. That morning, when Tita sent down to inquire if there were any letters for us at the post-office, and found there were none, she must needs send an urgent telegram to Twickenham, to see if the young man's parents knew anything of his whereabouts. Of course they could not possibly know. Doubtless he was on his way to Carlisle. Perhaps we should have the pleasure of meeting him in Edinburgh.

But this indefinite postponement of the coming of Arthur was a grievous irritation to the lieutenant. It was no relief to him that his rival was disposed to remain absent. The very odd position in which he was now placed made him

long for any result that would put an end to his suspense; and I think he was as anxious about seeing Arthur as any of us; that is to say, presuming Arthur to be certain to come sooner or later. If it should happen that the dog-cart had been upset— But there is no use in speculating on the horrible selfishness that enters into the hearts of young men who are in love and jealous.

All these things and many more the young Prussian revealed to the sympathetic silence of Grasmere and the fair green mountains around as he and I set out for a long walk. The women had gone to pay visits in the village and its neighborhood. It seemed a pity to waste so beautiful a day in going into a series of houses, but my lady was inexorable whenever she established to her own satisfaction that she owed a certain duty.

The lieutenant bade Bell good-bye with a certain sadness in his tone. He watched the two of them go down the white road in the glare of the sunshine, and then he turned with a listless air to set out on his pilgrimage into the hills. Of what avail was it that the lake out there shone a deep and calm blue under the clear sky, that the reflection of the wooded island was perfect as the perfect mirror, and that the far hills had drawn around them a thin tremulous veil of silver gauze under the strong heat of the sun? The freshness of the morning, save when a light breeze blew over from the west, and stirred the reeds of the lake, and awoke a white ripple in by the shore, had no effect in brightening up his face. He was so busy talking of Bell, and of Arthur, and of my lady, that it was with a serene unconsciousness he allowed himself to be led way from the lake into the lonely regions of the hills.

Even a hardy young Uhlan finds his breath precious when he is climbing a steep green slope, scrambling up shelves of loose earth and slate, and clinging on to bushes to help him in his ascent. There were interruptions in this flow of lover's complainings. After nearly an hour's climbing, Von Rosen had walked and talked Bell out of his head; and as he threw himself on a slope of Rydal

Fell, and pulled out a flask of sherry and his cigar-case, he laughed aloud and said, "No, I had no notion we were so high. Hee! that is a view! One does not see that often in my country: all houses and men swept away, you are alone in the world, and all around is nothing but mountains and lakes."

Indeed, there was away toward the south a network of hill and water that no one but Bell would have picked to pieces for us—thin threads of silver lying in long valleys, and mounds upon mounds rising up into the clear blue sky that sloped down to the white line of the sea. Coniston we could make out, and Windermere we knew. Esthwaite we guessed at, but of what avail was guessing when we came to that wild and beautiful panorama beyond and around?

The lieutenant's eyes went back to Grasmere: "How long is it you think madame will pay her visits?"

"Till the afternoon, probably. They will lunch with some of their friends."

"And we—do we climb any more mountains?"

"This is not a mountain—it is a hill. We shall climb or go down again, just as you please."

"There is nothing else to do but to wait if we go down?"

"I suppose you mean waiting for the ladies to return. No: our going down won't bring them back a minute the sooner."

"Then let us go on, anywhere."

We had a long, aimless and devious wandering that day among the grassy slopes and peaks of Rydal Fell, until we at length came down by the gorge through which Rydal Beck plunges foaming into the valley below. Wherever we went the lieutenant seemed chiefly to be concerned in marking out the chief places of beauty which we should bring the women to see on the morrow, as if Bell did not know Rydal Beck and all its falls as well as she knew Epsom Downs. And then we got down the winding road by Rydal Mount, and walked leisurely back by Rydal Water to Grasmere.

What was this that confronted us as we went into the hotel and went forward

to the large windows? The sun was lying brightly on the hills and the lake and the garden in front of us; and on the lawn, which was a blaze of bright color, three figures stood, throwing jet-black shadows on the green. Von Rosen stared, as well he might stare. For there were Bell and Tita engaged in earnest and interesting talk with a young man, and the young man was Arthur!

For a second or two the lieutenant did not utter a word, but presently he remarked, with a fine affectation of carelessness, "Have they had lunch, do you think?"

"Let us go and see," I say; and so our Uhlan stalks gloomily out into the garden.

Our appearance seemed to cause great embarrassment to the party on the lawn. Arthur, with a flush on his face, greeted us stiffly, and then he suddenly turned to Queen Tita and continued his talk with her in an ostentatiously impressive manner, as though he would give us to understand that he would take no more notice of us. Bell, apparently, had been rather left out in the cold. Perhaps she was a little vexed; for even the most amiable of girls have their notions of pride; and so what must she do but immediately turn to the lieutenant and ask him with much friendliness all about his forenoon's ramble?

If thankfulness and kindness and all the modest and grateful respect of love were ever written on a young man's face, they dwelt in the eyes of our Uhlan as he was almost struck dumb by this signal mark of Bell's condescension. He took no great advantage of the permission accorded to him. He did not seek to draw her away. In fact, after telling mademoiselle, with his eyes cast down, that he hoped she would come next day to see all that we had seen, he placed the burden of explanation on me, who would rather have sat on the back benches and looked from a distance at this strange comedy.

But the effect upon Arthur of this harmless conduct of Bell's was what might have been expected. When we

turned to go into the hotel for luncheon he was talking in rather a loud way, with a fine assumption of cynicism. He had not much to tell of his adventures—for the reason of his coming up so late was merely that the cob had gone a little lame, and had been brought with some care to Kendal, where it was to have a couple of days' rest—but his conversation took far wider sweeps than that. The climax of it came when we were sitting at table. All this time the lad had not addressed a word to Bell, but now he suddenly observed, "You remember that song of Lover's you used to sing, about 'the white sails flowing'?"

"Yes," said Bell: she had often sung it to him at his own request.

"It is a pretty song," said he with rather a ghastly smile, "but I heard a version of it the other night that I thought was a good deal truer. Shall I try to repeat the verses?"

"Yes, do," says Queen Titania with no great cordiality in her tone. She half anticipated what was coming.

"This is the first verse," said the young man, glancing rather nervously at Bell, and then instantly withdrawing his eyes:

"What will you do, love, when I am going,
With white sails flowing, the seas beyond?
What will you do, love, when waves divide us,
And friends may chide us for being fond?"

"When waves divide us and friends are chiding,
Afar abiding, I'll think anew;
And I'll take another devoted lover,
And I'll kiss him as I kissed you."

A frightful silence prevailed. We all of us knew that the reckless young man was rushing on self-destruction. Could he have devised a more ingenious method of insulting Bell? He proceeded:

"What will you do, love, if distant tidings
Thy fond confidings should undermine?
And I, abiding 'neath sultry skies,
Should think other eyes were as bright as thine?"

"Ah, joyful chance! If guilt or shame
Were round thy name, could I be true?
For I'd take the occasion, without much persuasion,
To have another flirtation: that's what I'd do."

If there are angels who watch over the fortunes of unhappy lovers, surely they must have wept at this moment. These foolish verses—and another one which

fear of my lady prevents my publishing here—were the actual outcome of all the rebellious thoughts that had been ranking in his mind like poison during these last few days. Along the lonely highway this was the devil's dirge he had been crooning to himself. He had fed on its unholy bitterness as he sat in remote inns, and pictured to himself, with a fierce satisfaction, the scene in which he would recite the lines to Bell before the whole of us.

And now the deed was done. He sat silent for a moment, and we were all of us silent. A waiter said, "Sherry, sir?" behind his ear, and he started. And then Queen Tita turned to Von Rosen and asked him if he had seen Rydal Mount.

It was a pitiable thing. In public life a man may force himself into the chancellorship of the exchequer, or some such office, by departing into a cave of Adullam and marshaling the discontented around him; but in love-affairs how is a man to profit by an exhibition of angry passion and recklessness? Force is of no avail—threatening is as idle as the wind. And there was something even more cruel than threatening in this recitation of the young man's, as only those who were familiar with our life in

Surrey could understand. What might come of it no one could tell.

[*Note by Queen Titania.*—I am no judge of what ought to be placed before the public: I leave that to those whose sense of *good taste* and *proper feeling* is probably better than mine. But if these *disgraceful* and *impertinent* verses are to be published, I have to say that the implication contained in the first verse is most cruelly *false*. To hint that Bell could have thought of kissing either Arthur or the lieutenant, or would have done so if they were *princes of the blood*, is most unjust and insulting to a girl whose pride and self-respect no one has ever dared to impeach. It is all very well for a stupid young man to say such things in a fit of *ungovernable rage*; but what I know is, that Bell cried very much about it when she spoke to me about it afterward. And both my husband and Count von Rosen sat still and never said a word. If *I* had been a man, I think I should have told Arthur very plainly what I thought of his *very pretty conduct*. But I suppose they considered it a jest, for I have frequently found that the notions of gentlemen about what is humorous are a *little peculiar*.]



PART IX.

CHAPTER XXV.

ARMAGEDDON.

Let us go hence, my songs : she will not hear :
Let us go hence together without fear.
Keep silence now, for singing-time is over,
And over all old things and all things dear.
She loves not you nor me as all we love her ;
Yea, though we sang as angels in her ear,
She would not hear.

BLOW, wind! and shriek, tempests!
Let all the gases be lowered, and
thunder roll through the gloom! Trem-
ble, ye forests of canvas, where twisted
oaks and shattered elms bear witness to
the agony of the scene; and let the low
music of the violoncello and the throbb-
ing of muffled drums announce that
dreadful deeds are brewing! Alas! we
had no such thrilling accompaniments
to the tragedy being enacted before our
eyes on the fair shores of Grasmere.
The lake lay as blue and as calm as
though no perplexed and suffering hu-
man souls were by its side; and instead
of the appropriate darkness of a theatre,
we had the far hills trembling under the
white haze of the midday heat. My lady
saw none of these things. Her heart
was rent asunder by the troubles of the
young folks under her charge, until I
seemed to see in her speechless eyes
a sort of despairing wish that she had
never been born.

"And yet," I say to her, "you don't
see the worst of it. If Arthur is driven
away by Bell, a far more terrible thing
will befall him."

"What?" says Queen Titania, with the
clear brown eyes grown solemn.

"He will marry somebody else."

"Bah!" she says peevishly: "is this
a time to be thinking of jests?"

"Faith! I know one who never dis-
covered the joke of it. But don't you
think that he will?"

"I wish he would."

"There's little Katty Tatham, now,
would give her ears to marry him."

"You always fancy girls are very anx-
ious to marry."

"I never asked but one, and I found
her ready enough."

"I refused you."

"You made a pretence of doing so."

"I wish I had kept to my first resolu-
tion."

"I wish you had, since you say so.
But that's of no consequence. I saved
you from committing suicide, as I have
frequently told you."

The small creature looks up, and with
an excellent calmness and self-compo-
sure says, "I suppose you never heard
of a young man—I thought him very
silly at the time, myself—who walked
about all one night at Eastbourne; and
in the morning, long before my mam-
ma was up, aroused the servants and
sent in a letter—a sort of ultimatum
it was—with all sorts of vows of ven-
geance and despair. That young man
wasn't Arthur Ashburton, but when you
complain of Arthur's mad follies—"

"Madam," I say to her, "your sex
protects you. Go and dine. But when
you say that I complain of Arthur, and
in the next breath accuse me of always
bringing forward excuses for him—"

But what was the use of continuing
the argument? My lady smiles with a
fine air of triumph, confident that her
ingenious logic had carried the day, as,
in fact, it generally does. The man
who endeavors to follow, seize and con-
front the airy statements made by a lady
in a difficulty, resembles nothing so
much as a railway-train trying to catch
a butterfly; and who would not back
the butterfly?

We were now placed in an uncom-
monly awkward fix. The arrival of
Arthur at Grasmere had produced a
complication such as we had not dreamt
of, for now it appeared as if the situation
were to be permanent. We had some-

how fancied that as soon as he overtook us some definite arrangement would be come to, settling at once and for ever those rival pretensions which were interfering with our holiday in a serious manner. At last, my lady had considered, the great problem was to be finally solved, and of course the solution lay in Bell's hands. But now Arthur had come, who was to move in the matter? It was not for Bell, at all events, to come forward and say to one of the young men, "Go!" and to the other, "Stay!" Neither of them, on the other hand, seemed disposed to do anything very bold and heroic in order to rid us of this grievous embarrassment; and so the first afternoon passed away, with some more walking, visiting and boating, in a stolidly and hopelessly reserved and dreary fashion.

But every one of us knew that a mine lay close at hand, and that at any moment a match might be flung into it. Every word that was uttered was weighed beforehand. As for Tita, the poor little woman was growing quite pale and fatigued with her constant and nervous anxiety, until one of the party privately told her that if no one else asked Bell to marry, he would himself, and so end our troubles.

"I don't know what to do," she said, sitting down and folding her hands on her knees, while there was quite a pitiable expression on her face. "I am afraid to leave them for a moment. Perhaps now they may be fighting; but that does not much matter, for Bell can't have gone down stairs to dinner yet. Don't you think you could get Arthur to go away?"

"Of what use would that be? He went away before, and then we had our steps dogged, and letters and telegrams in every town. No: let us have it out here."

"I wish you and he would have it out between you. That poor girl is being frightened to death."

"Say but one brief word, my dear, and Arthur will be feeding the fishes among the reeds of Grasmere before the morning. But would you really like

Bell to send Arthur off? Is he really to be told that she won't marry him? They used to be pets of yours. I have seen you regard them, as they walked before us along the lanes, with an amiable and maternal smile. Is it all over? Would you like him to go away and never see us any more?"

"Oh, I don't know!" cries Tita, with the anxiety and pity and tenderness in her eyes almost grown into tears.

That was a nice little project of hers with which we had started from the old tavern in Holborn. It had been tolerably successful. If Bell were not in love with the lieutenant, there could be no doubt, at least, that the lieutenant was hopelessly and over head and ears in love with Bell. It was a pretty comedy for a time, and my lady had derived an infinite pleasure and amusement from watching the small and scarcely perceptible degrees by which the young folks got drawn toward each other. What would have been the beautiful pictures of the English scenery we had driven through without two young lovers in the foreground trying to read their fate in each other's eyes, and affording us elderly folks all manner of kindly and comic reminiscences?

It had all turned out very well until suddenly came the revelation that the greatest happiness of the greatest number had demanded a human victim; and here that victim was before us, with gory locks and piteous eyes, demanding justice. Never before had my lady fully realized what was meant in the final sending away of Arthur; and now that she saw before her all the consequences of her schemes, she was struck to the heart, and dared not even ask for some reassurance as to what she had done.

"Oh," she says, "I hope I have done right!"

"You? Why should you assume any responsibility? Let the young folks arrange their own affairs as they like best. Do you think, if Bell had been willing to break with Arthur, that your packing off the lieutenant to Germany would prevent her making the acquaintance of

some other man? And she has not broken off with Arthur. If she does so, she does so, and there's an end of it; but why should you vex yourself about it?"

She was not to be comforted. She shook her head, and continued to sit there with her eyes full of anxious cares. When at length she went off to dress hastily for dinner, it was with a determination that from that moment she would endeavor to keep Arthur in every way she could. That was the form her repentance took.

If the young man had only known that he had secured this valuable ally! But just at this time, amid all our perplexity as to who should first precipitate matters, what should the reckless young man do but startle us all with a declaration which wholly altered the aspect of affairs?

We were seated at dinner. It was in the private room we had engaged, and the evening light, reflected from the lake outside, was shining upon Tita's gentle face as she sat at the head of the table. Bell was partly in shadow. The two young men, by some fatal mischance, sat next each other, probably because neither wished to take the unfair advantage offered by the empty seat next to Bell.

Well, something had occurred to stir up the smouldering fires of Arthur's wrath. He had been treated with great and even elaborate courtesy by everybody, but more particularly by Bell, during our afternoon rambles, but something had evidently gone wrong. There was a scowl on the fair and handsome face, that was naturally pleasant, boyish and agreeable in appearance. He maintained a strict silence for some little time after dinner was served, although my lady strove to entice him into the general talk. But presently he looked up, and, addressing her, said in a forcedly merry way, "Should you like to be startled?"

"Yes, please," Tita would probably have said, so anxious is she to humor everybody; but just then he added, in the same reckless and defiant tone,

"What if I tell you I am going to get married?"

An awful consternation fell upon us.

"Oh," says my lady in a hurried fashion, "you are joking, Arthur."

"No, I am not. And when I present the young lady to you, you will recognize an old friend of yours, whom you haven't seen for years."

To put these words down on paper can give no idea whatever of the ghastly appearance of jocularity which accompanied them, or of the perfectly stunning effect they produced. The women were appalled into silence. Von Rosen stared, and indifferently played with the stem of his wine-glass. For mere charity's sake I was driven into filling up this horrible vacuum of silence; and so I asked—with what show of appropriateness married people may judge—whether he had formed any plans for the buying of furniture.

Furniture! 'Tis an excellent topic. Everybody can say something about it. My lady, with a flash of gratitude in her inmost soul, seized upon the cue, and said, "Oh, Arthur, have you seen our sideboard?"

Now, when a young man tells you he is about to get married, it is rather an odd thing to answer, "*Oh, Arthur*"—or Tom, or Dick, or Harry, as the case may be—"*have you seen our sideboard?*" But all that my lady wanted was to speak, for Arthur, having accomplished his intention of startling us, had relapsed into silence.

"Of course he has seen the sideboard," I say for him. "He was familiar with the whole of that fatal transaction."

"Why fatal?" says the lieutenant.

You see we were getting on.

"Bell will tell you the history. No? Then I will, for the benefit of all folks who may have to furnish a house; and I hope Arthur, after the very gratifying announcement he has just made, will take heed."

"Oh yes," says Arthur gayly, "let us have all your experiences about house-matters. It is never too soon to learn."

"Very well. There was once a sideboard which lived in Dorking—"

Here the lieutenant begged to know what piece of furniture a sideboard was, and when that was explained to him the legend was continued: "It was a very grand old sideboard of carved oak, which had regarded the dinner-parties of several generations from its recess. At last it had to be sold at public auction. A certain agreeable and amiable lady, who lives on the banks of the river Mole, saw this sideboard, and was told she might have it for a trifle of ninety-five guineas. She is an impressionable person. The sideboard occupied her thoughts day and night, until at last her husband—who is the most obliging person in the world, and has no other desire in life than to obey her wishes—"

Here there were some interruptions at the farther end of the table. Silence having been restored, the speaker went on to say that the sideboard was bought. "It was the beginning of the troubles of that wretched man. When you have an old oak sideboard that farmers' wives will drive twenty miles to look at, you must have old oak chairs. When you have old oak chairs, a microcephalous idiot would know that you must have an old oak table. By slow degrees the home of this unhappy man underwent transformation. Rooms that had been familiar to him and homely, became gloomy halls which ghosts of a cheerful temperament would have fled from in despair. People came to dinner, and sat in the high-backed chairs with an expression of resigned melancholy on their faces; and now and again an unlucky lady of weight and dimensions would, on trying to rise from the table, tilt up the chair and save herself from falling by clinging to the arm of the man next her. For of course you can't have castors on old oak chairs, and when the stumps of wood have got well settled into the thick Turkey carpet, how is the chair to be set back?"

"That is quite absurd," says a voice. "Every one says our dining-room chairs are exceedingly comfortable."

"Yours are, but this is another matter. Now, the lady of the house did not stop

at oak furniture and solemn carpets and severe curtains. She began to dress herself and her children to match her furniture. She cut the hair of her own babes to suit that sideboard. There was nothing heard of but broad lace collars and black velvet garments, and what not, so that the boys might correspond with the curtains and not be wholly out of keeping with the chairs. She made a dress for her own mother which that estimable lady contemplated with profound indignation, and asked how she could be expected to appear in decent society in a costume only fit for a fancy ball."

"It was a most beautiful dress, wasn't it, Bell?" says a voice.

"But far worse was to come. She began to acquire a taste for everything that was old and marvelous. She kept her husband for hours stifling in the clammy atmosphere of Soho while she ransacked dirty shops for scraps of crockery that were dear in proportion to their ugliness. During these hours of waiting he thought of many things—suicide among the number. But what he chiefly ruminated on was the pleasing and ingenious theory that in decoration everything that is old is genuine, and everything that is new is meretricious. He was not a person of profound accomplishments—"

"Hear, hear!" says a voice.

"—and so he could not understand why he should respect the intentions of artists who a couple of centuries ago painted fans, and painted them badly, and why he should treat with scorn the intentions of artists who at this moment paint fans, and paint them well. He could not acquire any contempt for a French vase in gold and white and rose-color, even when it was put beside a vase of some three hundred years of age, which was chiefly conspicuous by its defective curves and bad color. As for Italian mirrors and blue-and-white china, he received without emotion the statement that all the world of London was wildly running after these things. He bore meekly the contemptuous pity bestowed on him when he expressed the

belief that modern Venetian glass was, on the whole, a good deal more beautiful than any he had seen of the old, and when he proposed to buy some of it as being more within the means of an ordinary person. But when at last—after having waited a mortal hour in a dingy hole in a dingy thoroughfare near Leicester Square—he was goaded into rebellion, and declared that he did not care a brass farthing, nor even the half of that sum, when an object of art was made, how it was made, where it was made, or by whom it was made, so long as it fulfilled its first duty of being good in design and workmanship and agreeable to the eye, it seemed to him that the end of his conjugal happiness was reached. Nothing short of a legal separation could satisfy the injured feelings of his wife. That she should have to live with this Goth and outer barbarian seemed to her monstrous. But at this time it occurred to her that she might find some use for even such a creature, considering that he was still possessed of a little money—”

“You seldom omit to bring that forward,” says the voice.

“—and that there was a drawing-room to be transformed. Then he beheld strange things. Phantom curtains of black and gold began to steal into the house. Hidden mysteries dwelt in the black, yellow and red of the carpet; and visitors paused upon the threshold for a moment to collect their wits after the first stun of looking in. Then all the oil of Greenland was unable to light up this gloomy chamber in the evening, and so there came down from London mighty sheets of mirrors to be let into the walls. ‘Now,’ said this reckless woman to her husband, ‘we must have a whole series of dinner-parties, to ask everybody to come and see what the house looks like.’”

“Oh, what a story!” cries that voice again. “Bell, did you ever hear the like of that? I wonder he does not say we put the prices on the furniture and invited the people to look at the cost. You don’t believe it, do you, Count von Rosen?”

“No, madame,” said the lieutenant. “I do not believe any lady exists such as that one which he describes.”

“But he means me,” says Tita.

“Then what shall I say?” continues the young man. “May I say that I have never seen—not in England, not in Germany—any rooms so beautifully arranged in the colors as yours? And it was all your own design? Ha! I know he is calling attention to that for the purpose of complimenting you—that is it.”

Of course that mean-spirited young man took every opportunity of flattering and cajoling Bell’s chief adviser, but what if he had known at this moment that she had gone over to the enemy and mentally vowed to keep Arthur by every means in her power?

She could not do much for him that evening. After dinner we had a little music, but there was not much life or soul in it. Arthur could sing an ordinary drawing-room song as well as another, and we half expected him to reveal his sorrows in that way, but he coldly refused. The lieutenant, at my lady’s urgent request, sat down to the piano and sang the song that tells of the maiden who lived “im Winkel am Thore,” but there was an absence of that spontaneity which generally characterized his rough and ready efforts in music, and after missing two of the verses he got over his task with an air of relief. It was very hard that the duty of dispelling the gloom should have been thrown on Bell, but when once she sat down and struck one or two of those minor chords which presaged one of the old ballads, we found a great refuge from our embarrassment. We were in another world then—with Chloe plaiting flowers in her hair, and Robin hunting in the greenwood with his fair lady, who was such a skillful archer, and all the lasses and lads kissing each other round the Maypole. With what a fine innocence Bell sang of these merry goings-on! I dare say a good many well-conducted young persons would have stopped with the stopping of the dancing, and never told what happened after

the fiddler had played "Packington's Pound" and "Sellinger's Round." But Bell, with no thought of harm, went merrily on :

Then after an hour
They went to a bower,
And played for ale and cakes,
And kisses too:
Until they were due
The lasses held the stakes.
The girls did then begin
To quarrel with the men,
And bid them take their kisses back,
And give them their own again!

In fact, there was a very bright smile of amusement on her face, and you could have fancied that her singing was on the point of breaking into laughing; for how could the girl know that my lady was looking rather reserved at the mention of that peculiar sort of betting? But then the concluding verse comes back to the realms of propriety, and Bell sang it quite gently and tenderly, as though she too were bidding good-bye to her companions in a frolic :

"Good-night," says Harry;
"Good-night," says Mary;
"Good-night," says Dolly to John;
"Good-night," says Sue
To her sweetheart Hugh;
"Good-night," says every one.
Some walked and some did run,
Some loitered on the way,
And bound themselves by kisses twelve
To meet next holiday—
And bound themselves by kisses twelve
To meet next holiday!

"Mademoiselle," said Von Rosen, coming forward to her with quite a paternal air, "you must not sing any more to-night. You are always too ready to sing for us, and you do not reflect of the fatigue." And as Bell stood rather embarrassed by this exhibition of thoughtfulness, and as Arthur glowered gloomily out from his corner, the lieutenant made some excuse for himself and me, and presently we found ourselves out by the shores of the lake, smoking a contemplative cigar under the clear starlight.

"Now, my good friend," he said suddenly, "tell me—is it a lie, yes?"

"Is what a lie?"

"That foolish story that he will be married."

"Oh, you mean Arthur. I had almost forgotten what he said at dinner. Well, perhaps it is a lie: young men in love are always telling lies about something or other."

"Heh!" says the lieutenant peevishly, "you do know it is not true. How can it be true?"

"Of course you want me to say that I think it true—you boys are so unreasonable. I don't know anything about it. I don't care. If he wants to marry some girl or other, I hope he may. The wish is perhaps not very friendly—"

"Now look at this!" says the lieutenant quite fiercely, and in a voice so loud that I was afraid it might reach the windows of the hotel that were now sending a yellow light over the lawn: "if he means to marry some other young lady, why is he here? He has no business here. Why does he come here to annoy every one and make himself miserable? He ought to go away, and it is you that should send him away."

"Bless me! Surely a man may come and stop at a hotel at Grasmere without asking my permission. I have no right to forbid Arthur remaining in Westmoreland or any other county. He does not ask me to pay his bills."

"This that madame says, it is quite true, then," says the lieutenant angrily—"that you care only for your own comfort?"

"When madame says such things she retains the copyright. Don't let her hear you repeating them if you are wise, or you'll get into trouble. As for myself, this cigar is excellent, and you may let your vexation take any shape that is handy. I foresaw that we should soon have two Arthurs in the field."

The tall young soldier walked up and down for a minute or two, evidently in great distress, and at last he stopped, and said in a very humble voice, "My dear friend, I beg your pardon. I do not know what I say when I see this pitiful fellow causing so much pain to your wife and to mademoiselle. Now, when you look at them—not at me at all—will not you endeavor to do something?"

He was no great hand at diplomacy, this perplexed and stammering Uhlan, who seemed bent on inflicting his anger on his cigar. To introduce the spectacle of two suffering women so as to secure the banishment of his rival was a very transparent device, and might have provoked laughter but that Grasmere is deep and a young man in love exceedingly irritable.

"He says he is going to marry some other girl: what more would you like? You don't want to carry off all his sweet-hearts from the unfortunate youth?"

"But it is not true."

"Very well."

"And you talk of carrying off his sweetheart. Mademoiselle was never his sweetheart—I can assure you of that; and besides I have not carried her off, nor am likely to do that so long as this wretched fellow hangs about and troubles her much with his complainings. Now, if she will only say to me that I may send him away, I will give you my word he is not in this part of the country—no, not one day longer."

"Take care! You can't commit murder in this country with impunity, except in one direction. You may dispose of your wife as you please, but if you murder any reasonable being, you will suffer."

Indeed, the lieutenant, pacing up and down the narrow path by the lake, looked really as if he would have liked to catch Arthur up and dash him against Mercator's Projection or some other natural phenomenon; and the more he contemplated his own helplessness in the matter, the more he chafed and fumed. The moon rose slowly from behind the hills and ran along the smooth surface of the lake, and found him nursing this volcano of wrath in his breast. But suddenly, as he looked up, he saw the blind of one of the hotel-windows thrust aside, and he knew that Bell was there contemplating the wonderful beauties of the night. He ceased his growlings. A more human expression came over his face, and then he proposed that we should go in, lest the ladies should want to say good-night.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE LAST OF GRASMERE.

Muss aus dem Thal jetzt scheiden,
 Wo alles Lust und Klang;
 Das ist mein herbstes Leiden,
 Mein letzter Gang!
 Dich, mein stilles Thal,
 Grüß' ich tausend Mal!
 Das ist mein herbstes Leiden,
 Mein letzter Gang!

A STILL greater surprise was in store for us next morning. My lady had taken leave to discredit altogether the story of Arthur's approaching marriage. She regarded it as merely the wild and reckless utterance of vexation. For the young man's sake she hoped that no one would make any allusion to this topic, and that he himself would allow it to fall into the rapidly-running waters of oblivion.

Now, he had on the previous day despatched a message to Kendal to the effect that the dog-cart should be at once sent to him, if the cob had quite recovered. He proposed to accompany us as far as Penrith or Carlisle: farther than that he said he did not care to go. But as the trap was likely to arrive that forenoon, and as he had to see the man who would bring it, he begged us to start for our forenoon's walk by ourselves—a proposal which was accepted with equanimity by the whole of our party. The young man was quite complaisant. My lady was very attentive to him, and we thought we should start for our ramble with the consciousness that we had left behind us no wretched creature eating away his heart with thoughts of revenge.

Somehow, this mood passed rapidly away from him. The spectacle of Bell and the lieutenant planning with a great joy the outline of our morning's excursion seemed to bring back all the bitterness of his spirit. He was silent for a long time—until, indeed, we were ready to leave the hotel; and then, as he accompanied us to the door, he produced a letter and said, with an affectation of carelessness, "By the way, I have a message for you. It was lucky I thought of going round to the post-office this morning, or I should probably have missed this. Katty Tatham desires to

be remembered to you all, and hopes you will bring her back a piece of Scotch neather to show that you went all the way. Ta-ta!"

He waved his hand to us and went in. My lady looked at me solemnly, and said nothing for a moment, until Bell had passed along the road a little bit with the lieutenant.

"Is that another story, do you think? Do you believe Katty Tatham is actually in correspondence with him?"

"He did not say so."

"He meant we should infer it, at all events; and that after what he said last night—"

Tita was dreadfully puzzled. She could understand how vexation of spirit might drive a foolish young man into making a statement not wholly in accordance with fact, but that he should repeat this legend in another way, and bring the name of a lady into it—no, Tita could scarcely believe that all this was untrue.

She hurried up to Bell, and placed her hand within the young lady's arm: "Is it not strange that Katty Tatham should be writing to Arthur, if that was what he meant?"

"Oh no, not at all. They are very old friends; and besides, she does all the letter-writing for her papa, who is almost blind now, poor old man! And what a nice girl she is! isn't she, Tita?"

Of course we were all anxious to persuade each other that Katty Tatham was the very nicest girl in all England, although none of us except Bell had seen her for two or three years; and it was wonderful how this sort of talk brightened up the spirits of our party. The lieutenant grew quite interested in Katty Tatham. He was nearly praising her himself, although he had never heard her name until that moment. In short the four of us were ready to swear that this poor little Katty was just as pleasant and honest and pretty and charming a girl as was to be found anywhere in the world, or out of it, and that it was most singular that she had never married. Tita declared that she knew that Katty had had ever so many offers, and that it

was not alone the frailties of her father that kept her from marrying.

"She must have been waiting for some one," said the small woman rather slyly.

What a morning it was! As we walked along the white road in the stillness of the heat, the blue waters of Grasmere glimmered through the trees. Never had we seen the colors of Bell's Fairyland so intense. The hills in the distance had a silvery haze thrown over their pale purples, but here around us the sharp clear colors blazed in the sunshine—the deep blue of Grasmere, the yellow-white of the road and the various rich greens and browns of the trees and the shore. And then, by and by, we came in sight of Rydal Water. How different it was to the weird and gloomy lake we had found two evenings before lying buried between the hills! Now it seemed shallow and fair and light, with a gray shimmer of wind across its surface, breaking here and there the perfect mirror of the mountain-slopes and woods. In the absolute silence around us we could hear the water-hens calling to each other, and out there among the reeds we could see them paddling about, dipping their heads into the lake and fluttering their wings. We walked on to Rydal Bridge, and had a look at the clear brown rivulet rushing down its narrow channel between the thick underwood and the trees. We took the lieutenant up to Rydal Mount—the small house with its tree-fuschias standing bright and warm in the sunshine—and from the plateau in front beheld the great fair landscape around the silver-white lake of Windermere. We went up to the falls of Rydal Beck, and in short went the round of the ordinary tourist,—all for the sake of our Prussian friend, we persuaded ourselves. Bell was his guide, and he looked as though he would have liked to be led for ever. Perhaps he took away with him but a confused recollection of all the interesting things she told him; but surely, if the young man has a memory, he cannot even now have forgotten that bright clear, warm day that was spent about

Rydal, with a certain figure in the foreground that would have lent a strange and gracious charm to a far less beautiful picture.

"Is it not an odd thing," I say to Queen Titania, who has been pulling and plaiting wild flowers in order to let the young folks get ahead of us, "how you associate certain groups of unheeding trees and streams and hills with various events in your life, and can never get over the impression that they wear such and such a look?"

"I dare say it's quite true, but I don't understand," she says with the calm impertinence that distinguishes her.

"If you will cease for a moment to destroy your gloves by pulling those weeds, I will tell you a story which will convey my meaning to your small intellect."

"Oh, a story!" she says, with a beautiful sigh of resignation.

"There was a young lady once upon a time who was about to leave England and go with her mamma to live in the south-west of France. They did not expect to come back for a good many years, if ever they came back. And so a young man of their acquaintance got up a farewell banquet at Richmond, and several friends came down to the hotel: they sat in a room overlooking the windings of the river and the soft masses of foliage and the far landscape stretching on to Windsor. The young man had, a little time before, asked the young lady to marry him, and she refused, but he bore her no malice—"

"He has taken care to have his revenge since," says Tita.

"You interrupt the story. They sat down to dinner on this summer evening. Every one was delighted with the view, but to this wretched youth it seemed as though the landscape were drowned in sadness, and the river a river of unutterable grief. All the trees seemed to be saying good-bye, and when the sun went down it was as though it would never light up any other day with the light of bygone days. The mist came over the trees. The evening fell, slow and sad and gray. Down by the stream a single window was lit up, and that

made the melancholy of the picture even more painful, until the young man, who had eaten nothing and drunk nothing, and talked to people as though he were in a dream, felt as if all the world had grown desolate, and was no more worth having—"

"If I had only known!" says Tita, in a voice so low and gentle that you could scarcely have heard it.

"And then, you know, the carriages came round, and he saw her, with the others, come down stairs, prepared to leave. He bade good-night to the mamma, who got into the carriage. He bade good-night to her, and she was about to get in too when she suddenly remembered that she had left some flowers in the dining-room, and ran back to fetch them. Before he could overtake her she had got the flowers and was coming back through the passage into the hall. 'It isn't good-night, it is good-bye we must say'—I think he said something like that—and she held out her hand, and somehow there was a very strange look in her eyes, just as if she were going to cry— But, you know, there's no use in your crying just now about it."

Tita is pretending to smile, but a certain tremor of the lips is visible, and so the narrator hurries on:

"Now look here. For the next three months—for the soft-hearted creature had hurriedly whispered that she might return to England then—that young man haunted Richmond. He pretty nearly ruined his prospects in life, and his digestion as well, by continual and solitary dining at the Star and Garter. He could have kissed the stone steps of that hotel, and never entered its vestibule without blessing the white pillars and blank walls. He spent hours in writing letters there—"

"So that the Biarritz boatmen wondered why so many envelopes should have the Richmond postmark," says Tita, though how she could have learnt anything about it Goodness only knows.

"—and haled out every complaisant friend he could lay hands on to moon about the neighborhood. But the strange thing is this, that while he was in love

with the vestibule of the hotel, he never saw the twilight fall over the Richmond woods without feeling a cold hand laid on his heart; and when he thinks of the place now, with the mists coming over the trees and the river getting dark, he thinks that the view from Richmond Hill is the most melancholy in the world."

"And what does he think of Eastbourne?"

"That is a very different thing. He and she got into the quarreling stage there—"

"In which they have successfully remained to the present time."

"—but when she was young and innocent she would always admit that she had begun the quarrel."

"On the contrary, she told stories in order to please him."

"That motive does not much control her actions now-a-days, at all events."

Here Tita would probably have delivered a crushing reply, but that Bell came up and said, "What! you two children fighting again? What is it all about? Let me be umpire."

"He says that there is more red in the Scotch daisies than in the English daisies," says Tita calmly. It was well done. Yet you should hear her lecture her two boys on the enormity of telling a fib!

How sad Bell was to leave the beautiful valley in which we had spent this happy time! Arthur had got his dog-cart, and when the phaeton was brought round the major's cob was also put to, and both vehicles stood at the door. We took a last look at Grasmere.

"Dich, mein stilles Thal!" said Bell with a smile; and the lieutenant looked quite shamefaced with pleasure to hear her quote his favorite song.

Arthur did not so well like the introduction of those few words. He said, with a certain air of indifference, "Can I give anybody a seat in the dog-cart? It would be a change."

"Oh, thank you!—I should like so much to go with you, Arthur!" says Tita.

Did you ever see the like of it? The woman has no more notion of considering her own comfort than if she had the

hide of an alligator, instead of being, as she is, about the most sensitive creature in the world. However, it is well for her—if she will permit me to say so—that she has people around her who are not quite so impulsively generous; and on this occasion it was obviously necessary to save her from being tortured by the fractious complainings of this young man, whom she would have sympathized with and consoled if the effort had cost her her life.

"No," I say, "that won't do. We have got some stiff hills to climb presently, and some one must remain in the phaeton while the others walk. Now, who looks best in the front of the phaeton?"

"Tita, of course," says Bell, as if she had discovered a conundrum; and so the matter was settled in a twinkling.

I think it would have been more courteous for Arthur to have given the phaeton precedence, considering who was driving it; but he was so anxious to show off the paces of Major Quinet's cob that on starting he gave the animal a touch of the whip that made the light and high vehicle spring forward in a surprising manner.

"Young man, reflect that you are driving the father of a family," I say to him.

Nevertheless, he went through the village of Grasmere at a considerable rate of speed, and when we got well up into the road which goes by the side of the Rothay up into the region of the hills, we found that we had left Tita and her company far behind. Then he began to walk the cob.

"Look here!" he said quite fiercely: "is Bell going to marry that German fellow?"

"How do I know?" I answer, astonished by the young man's impudence.

"You ought to know. You are her guardian. You are responsible for her—"

"To you?"

"No, not to me, but to your own conscience; and I think the way in which you have entrapped her into making the acquaintance of this man, of whom she knows nothing, doesn't look very well. I may as well say it when I think it.

You ought to have known that a girl at her age is ready to be pleased with any novelty; and to draw her away from her old friends— I suppose you can explain it all to your own satisfaction, but I confess that to me—”

I let the young man rave. He went on in this fashion for some little time, getting momentarily more reckless and vehement and absurd in his statements. If Tita had only known what she had escaped!

“But, after all,” I say to him when the waters of this deluge of rhetoric had abated, “what does it matter to you? We have allowed Bell to do just as she pleased; and perhaps, for all we know, she may regard Count von Rosen with favor, although she has never intimated such a thing. But what does it matter to you? You say you are going to get married.”

“So I shall!” he said with an unnecessary amount of emphasis.

“Katty Tatham is a very nice girl.”

“I should think so! There’s no coquetry about her, or that sort of vanity that is anxious to receive flattery from every sort of stranger that is seen in the street—”

“You don’t mean to say that that is the impression you have formed of Bell?”

And here all his violence and determination broke down. In a tone of absolute despair he confessed that he was beside himself, and did not know what to do. What should he do? Ought he to implore Bell to promise to marry him? Or should he leave her to her own ways, and go and seek a solution of his difficulties in marrying this pretty little girl down in Sussex, who would make him a good wife and teach him to forget all the sufferings he had gone through? The wretched young fellow was really in a bad way, and there were actually tears in his eyes when he said that several times of late he had wished he had the courage to drown himself.

To tell a young man in this state that there is no woman in the world worth making such a fuss about, is useless. He rejects with scorn the cruel counsels offered by middle age, and sees in them

only taunts and insults. Moreover, he accuses middle age of not believing in its own maxims of worldly prudence; and sometimes that is the case.

“At all events,” I say to him, “you are unjust to Bell in going on in this wild way. She is not a coquette, nor vain, nor heartless: and if you have anything to complain of or anything to ask from her, why not go direct to herself, instead of indulging in frantic suspicions and accusations?”

“But—but I cannot,” he said. “It drives me mad to see her talking to that man. If I were to begin to speak to her of all this, I am afraid matters would be made worse.”

“Well, take your own course. Neither my wife nor myself has anything to do with it. Arrange it among yourselves; only, for Goodness’ sake, leave the women a little peace.”

“Do you think I mean to trouble them?” he says, firing up. “You will see.”

What deep significance lay in these words was not inquired into, for we had now to descend from the dog-cart. Far behind us we saw that Bell and Count von Rosen were already walking by the side of the phaeton, and Tita talking to them from her lofty seat. We waited for them until they came up, and then we proceeded to climb the steep road that leads up and along the slopes of the mighty Helvellyn.

“Mademoiselle,” said the lieutenant, “who is it will say that there is much rain in your native country? Or did you alarm us so as to make this surprise all the better? Yes?”

Indeed, there was scarcely a flake of white in all the blue overhead, and on the other side of the great valley the masses of the Wythburn and Borradaile Fells showed their various hues and tints so that you could almost have fancied them transparent clouds. Then the road descended, and we got down to the solitary shores of Thirlmere, the most Scotch-looking, perhaps, of the English lakes. Here the slopes of the hills are more abrupt, houses are few and far between, there is an aspect of remoteness

and a perfect silence reigning over the still water, and the peaks of mountains that you see beyond are more jagged and blue than the rounded hills about Windermere. From the shores of Thirlmere the road again rises, until, when you come to the crest of the height, you find the leaden-colored lake lying sheer below you, and only a little stone wall guarding the edge of the precipitous slope. We rested the horses here. Bell began to pull them handfuls of Dutch clover and grass. The lieutenant talked to my lady about the wonders of mountainous countries as they appeared to people who had been bred in the plains. Arthur looked over the stone wall down into the great valley; and was he thinking, I wonder, whether the safest refuge from all his troubles might not be that low-lying and silent gulf of water that seemed to be miles beneath him?

When we were about to start again the lieutenant says to Arthur, "If you are tired of driving the dog-cart, you might come into the phaeton, and I will drive your horse on to Keswick."

Who prompted him to make such an offer? Not himself, surely. I had formed a tolerable opinion of his good-nature, but the impatient and fretful manner in which he had of late been talking about Arthur rendered it highly improbable that this suggestion was his own. What did Bell's downcast look mean?

"Thank you, I prefer the dog-cart," says Arthur coldly.

"Oh, Arthur," says Bell, "you've no idea how steep the hill is going down to Keswick, and in a dog-cart, too—"

"I suppose," says the young man, "that I can drive a dog-cart down a hill as well as anybody else."

"At all events," says the lieutenant, with something of a frown, "you need not address mademoiselle as if that she did you harm in trying to prevent your breaking your neck."

This was getting serious, so that there was nothing for it but to bundle the boy into his dog-cart and order the lieutenant to change places with my lady. As for the writer of these pages, the emotions he experienced while a mad young

fellow was driving him in a light and high dog-cart down the unconscionable hill that lies above Keswick, he will not attempt to describe. There are occurrences in life which it is better to forget; but if ever he was tempted to evoke maledictions on the hotheadedness and bad temper and general insanity of boys in love— Enough! We got down to Keswick in safety.

Now we had got among the tourists and no mistake. The hotel was all alive with elderly ladies, who betrayed an astonishing acquaintance with the names of the mountains, and apportioned them off for successive days as if they were dishes for luncheon and dinner. The landlord undertook to get us beds somewhere, if only we would come into his coffee-room, which was also a drawing-room and had a piano in it. He was a portly and communicative person, with a certain magnificence of manner which was impressive. He betrayed quite a paternal interest in Tita, and calmly and loftily soothed her anxious fears. Indeed, his assurances pleased us much, and we began rather to like him, although the lieutenant privately remarked that *Clicquot* is a French word, and ought not, under any circumstances whatever, to be pronounced "Clickot."

Then we went down to Derwentwater. It was a warm and clear twilight. Between the dark green lines of the hedges we met maidens in white with scarlet opera-cloaks coming home through the narrow lane. Then we got into the open and found the shores of the silver lake, and got into a boat and sailed out upon the still waters, so that we could face the wonders of a brilliant sunset.

But all that glow of red and yellow in the north-west was as nothing to the strange gradations of color that appeared along the splendid range of mountain-peaks beyond the lake. From the remote north round to the south-east they stretched like a mighty wall; and whereas near the gold and crimson of the sunset they were of a warm, roseate and half-transparent purple, as they came along into the darker regions of the twilight they grew more and more

cold in hue and harsh in outline. Up there in the north they had caught the magic colors, so that they themselves seemed but light clouds of beautiful vapor; but as the eye followed the line of twisted and mighty shapes the rose-color deepened into purple, the purple grew darker and more dark, and greens and blues began to appear over the wooded islands and shores of Derwentwater. Finally, away down there in the south there was a lowering sky, into which rose wild masses of slate-colored mountains, and in the threatening and yet clear darkness that reigned among these solitudes we could see but one small tuft of white cloud that clung coldly to the gloomy summit of Glaramara.

That strange darkness in the south boded rain, and, as if in anticipation of the wet, the fires of the sunset went down and a gray twilight fell over the land. As we walked home between the tall hedges there was a chill dampness in the air, and we seemed to know that we had at last bade good-bye to the beautiful weather that had lit up for us the blue waters and green shores of Grasmere.

[*Note by Queen Titania.*—I begin to think the old lady in Nottinghamshire had some excuse for what she said, although she need not have expressed herself so *rudely*. Of course it is impossible to put down all that we spoke

about on those happy days of our journey, but when all the ordinary talk is *carefully excluded*, and everything *spiteful* retained, I cannot wonder that a stranger should think that my husband and myself do not lead a *very pleasant life*. It looks very *serious* when it is put in type; whereas we have been driven into all this nonsense of quarreling merely to temper the excessive sentimentality of those young folks, which is quite *amusing* in its way. Indeed, I am afraid that Bell, although she has never said a word to that effect to me, is *far more deeply pledged* than one who thinks he has a great insight into such affairs has any notion of. I am sure it was none of my doing. If Bell had told me she was engaged to Arthur, nothing could have given me greater pleasure. In the mean time, I hope no one will read too literally the foregoing pages, and think that in our house we are continually treading on lucifer matches and frightening everybody by small explosions. I suppose it is *literary art* that compels such a perversion of the truth; and as for Chapter XXVI.—which has a great deal of nonsense in it about Richmond—I should think that a very good motto for it would be two lines I once saw quoted somewhere. I don't know who is the author, but they said—

The legend is as true, I undertake,
As Tristram is, or Lancelot of the Lake.]



PART X.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ALONG THE GRETA.

You stood before me like a thought,
A dream remembered in a dream;
But when those meek eyes first did seem
To see me, Love within you wrought.
O Greta, dear domestic stream!
Has not, since then, Love's prompture deep,
Has not Love's whisper evermore,
Been ceaseless as thy gentle roar?
Sole voice when other voices sleep,
Dear under-song in Clamor's hour.

"NOW, Bell," says Tita, "I am going to ask you a serious question."

"Yes, mamma," says the girl dutifully.

"Where is the North Country?"

Goodness gracious! This was a pretty topic to start as we sat idly by the shores of Derwentwater and watched the great white clouds move lazily over the mountain-peaks beyond. For did it not involve some haphazard remark of Bell's which would instantly plunge the lieutenant into the history of Strathclyde, so as to prove, in defiance of the first principles of logic and the Ten Commandments, that the girl was altogether right? Bell solved the difficulty in a novel fashion. She merely repeated, in a low and careless voice, some lines from the chief favorite of all her songs:

While sadly I roam I regret my dear home,
Where lads and young lasses are making the hay,
The merry bells ring and the birds sweetly sing,
And maidens and meadows are pleasant and gay:
Oh the oak and the ash and the bonny ivy tree,
They grow so green in the North Countree!

"But where is it?" says Tita. "You are always looking to the North and never getting there. Down in Oxford, you were all anxiety to get up to Wales. Once in Wales, you hurried us on to Westmoreland. Now you are in Westmoreland, you are still hankering after the North, and I want to know where you mean to stop? At Carlisle? Or Edinburgh? Or John o' Groat's?"

The little woman was becoming quite eloquent, in her quiet and playful fash-

ion, as she sat there with Bell's hand in hers. The girl looked rather embarrassed, and so, of course, the lieutenant, always on the lookout for such a chance, must needs whip up his heavy artillery and open fire on Bell's opponent. "No, madame," he says, "why should you fix down that beautiful country to any place? Is it not better to have the dream always before you? You are too practical."

Too practical! This from an impertinent young Uhlan to a gentle lady whose eyes are full of wistful visions and fancies from the morning to the night!

"It is better that you have it like the El Dorado that the old travelers went to seek—always in front of them, but never just in sight. Mademoiselle is quite right not to put down her beautiful country in the map."

"Count von Rosen," says my lady with some show of petulance, "you are always proving Bell to be in the right. You never help me, and you know I never get any assistance from the quarter whence it ought to come. Now, if I were to say that I belonged to the North Country, you would never think of bringing all sorts of historical arguments to prove that I did."

"Madame," says the young man with great modesty, "the reason is, that you never need any such arguments, for you are always in the right at the first."

Here Bell laughs in a very malicious manner, for was not the retort provoked? My lady asks the girl to watch the creeping of a shadow over the summit of Glamara, as if that had anything to do with the history of Deira.

Well, the women owed us some explanation, for between them they had resolved upon our setting out for Penrith that afternoon. All the excursions we had planned in this beautiful neighbor-

hood had to be abandoned, and for no ostensible reason whatever. That there must be some occult reason, however, for this odd resolve was quite certain, and the lieutenant and myself were left to fit such keys to the mystery as we might think proper.

Was it really, then, this odd longing of Bell's to go northward, or was it not rather a secret consciousness that Arthur would cease to accompany us at Carlisle? The young man had remained behind at the hotel that morning. He had important letters to write, he said. A telegram had arrived for him while we were at breakfast, and he had remarked, in a careless way, that it was from Mr. Tatham, Katty's father. Perhaps it was. There is no saying what a reckless young fellow may not goad an elderly gentleman into doing; but if this message, as we were given to understand, had really something to do with Arthur's relations toward Katty, it was certainly an odd matter to arrange by telegraph.

As for the lieutenant, he appeared to treat the whole affair with a cool indifference which was probably assumed. In private conversation he informed me that what Arthur might do in the way of marrying Miss Tatham or anybody else was of no consequence whatever to him.

"Mademoiselle will tell me my fate—that is enough," he said. "You think that I am careless, yes? It is not so, except I am convinced your friend from Twickenham has nothing to do with it. No, he will not marry mademoiselle—that is so clear that any one can see it—but he may induce her, frighten her, complain of her, so that she will not marry me. Good! If it is so, I will know who has served me that way."

"You needn't look as if you meant to eat up the whole family," I say to him.

"And more," he continued with even greater fierceness—"it has come to be too much, this. He shall not go beyond Carlisle with us. I will not allow mademoiselle to be persecuted. You will say I have no right—that it is no business of mine—"

"That is precisely what I do say.

Leave the girl to manage her own affairs. If she wishes Arthur to go, she can do it with a word. Do you think there is no method of giving a young man his *congé* but by breaking his neck?"

"Oh, you think, then, that mademoiselle wishes him to remain near her?"

A sudden cold reserve had fallen over the young fellow's manner. He stood there for a moment as if he calmly expected to hear the worst, and was ready to pack up his traps and betake himself to the South.

"I tell you again," I say, "that I think nothing about it and know nothing about it. But as for the decree of Providence which ordained that young people in love should become the pest and torture of their friends, of all the inscrutable, unjust, perplexing and monstrous facts of life, this is about the worst. I will take a cigar from you, if you please."

"That is all you care for—yes, a cigar," says the young man peevishly. "If the phaeton were to be smashed to pieces this afternoon—a cigar. If mademoiselle were to go and marry this wretched fellow—again a cigar. I do not think that you care more for anything around you than the seal which comes up and shakes hands with his keeper in the Zoological Gardens."

"Got a light?"

"And yet I think it is possible you will get a surprise very soon. Yes, and will not be so indifferent. After Carlisle—"

"After Carlisle you come to Gretna Green. But if you propose to run away with Bell, don't take my horses: they are not used to hard work."

"Run away! You do talk as if mademoiselle were willing to run away with anybody. No, it is quite another thing."

And here the lieutenant, getting into the morose state—which always follows the fierceness of a lover—begins to pull about the shawls and pack them up.

Nevertheless, the eighteen miles between Keswick and Penrith proved one of the pleasantest drives of our journey. There was not much driving, it is true. We started at midday, and, having

something like five or six hours in which to get over this stretch of mountain and moorland road, we spent most of the time in walking, even Tita descending from her usual post to wander along the hedgerows and look down into the valley of the Greta. As the white road rose gradually from the plains of the lakes, taking us along the slopes of the mighty Saddleback, the view of the beautiful country behind us grew more extended and lovely. The clear silver day showed us the vast array of mountains in the palest of hues, and as white clouds floated over the hills and the gleaming surface of Derwentwater, even the shadows seemed pale and luminous. There was no mist, but a bewildering glare of light that seemed at once to transpose and blend the clouds, the sky, the hills and the lake. There was plenty of motion in the picture, too, for there was a south wind blowing light shadows of gray across the silver whiteness, but there was no lowering mass of vapor lying up at the horizon, and all our evil anticipations of the previous day remained unfulfilled.

What a picturesque glen is that over which the great back of Saddleback towers! We could hear the Greta rushing down the chasm through a world of light-green foliage, and sometimes we got a glimpse of the stream itself—a rich brown with dashes of white foam. Then you cross the river where it is joined by St. John's Beck, and as you slowly climb the side of Saddleback the Greta becomes the Glenderamackin, and by and by you lose it altogether as it strikes off to the north. But there are plenty of streams about. Each gorge and valley has its beck, and you can hear the splashing of the water where there is nothing visible but masses of young trees lying warm and green in the sunshine.

And as for the wild flowers that grow here in a wonderful luxuriance of form and color, who can describe them? The lieutenant was growing quite learned in English wild blossoms. He could tell the difference between herb robert and ragged robin, was not to be deceived

into believing the rock-rose a buttercup, and had become profound in the study of the various speedwells. But he was a late scholar. Arthur had been under Bell's tuition years before. He knew all the flowers she liked best: he could pick them out at a distance, without going through the trouble of laboriously comparing them, as our poor lieutenant had to do. You should have seen these two young men, with black rage in their hearts, engaged in the idyllic pastime of culling pretty blossoms for a fair maiden. Bell treated them both with a simple indifference that was begotten chiefly by the very definite interest she had in their pursuit. She was really thinking a good deal more of her tangled and picturesque bouquet than of the intentions of the young men in bringing the flowers to her. She was speedily to be recalled from her dream.

At a certain portion of the way we came upon a lot of forget-me-nots that were growing amid the roadside grass, meaning no harm. The pale turquoise-blue of the flowers was looking up to the silver-white fleece of the sky, just as if there was some communion between the two that rude human hands had no right to break. Arthur made a plunge at them. He pulled up at once some half dozen stalks and came back with them to Bell. "Here," he said, with a strange sort of smile, "are some forget-me-nots for you. They are supposed to be typical of woman's constancy—are they not?—for they keep fresh about half a dozen hours."

Bell received the flowers without a trace of surprise or vexation in her manner, and then, with the most admirable self-possession, she turned to the lieutenant, separated one of the flowers from the lot, and said with a great gentleness and calmness, "Count von Rosen, do you care to have one of these? You have very pretty songs about the forget-me-not in Germany."

I believe that young fellow did not know whether he was dead or alive at the moment when the girl addressed him thus. For a single second a flash of surprise and bewilderment appeared

in his face, and then he took the flower from her and said, looking down as if he did not wish any of us to see his face, "Mademoiselle, thank you."

But almost directly afterward he had recovered himself. With an air as if nothing had happened he pulled out his pocket-book, most carefully and tenderly put the flower in it and closed it again. Arthur, with his face as hot as fire, had begun to talk to Tita about Threlkeld Hall.

It was a pretty little scene to be enacted on this bright morning, on a grassy wayside in Cumberland, with all the lakes and mountains of Westmoreland for a blue and silvery background. But, after all, of what importance was it? A girl may hand her companion of the moment a flower without any deadly intent? How was any one to tell, indeed, that she had so turned to the lieutenant as a retort to Arthur's not very courteous remark? There was no appearance of vexation in her manner. On the contrary, she turned and gave Von Rosen this paltry little forget-me-not and made a remark about German songs just as she might have done at home in Surrey to any of the young fellows who come dawdling about the house, wondering why such a pretty girl should not betray a preference for somebody. Even as a punishment for Arthur's piece of impudence it might not have any but the most transitory significance. Bell is quick to feel any remark of the kind, and it is just possible that at the moment she may have been stung into executing this pretty and pastoral deed of vengeance.

But the lieutenant, at all events, was persuaded that something of mighty import had just occurred on the picturesque banks of this Cumberland stream. He hung about Bell for some time, but seemed afraid to address her, and had ceased to offer her flowers. He was permitted to bring her a sunshade, however, and that pleased him greatly. And thereafter he went up to the horses and walked by their heads, and addressed them in very kindly and soothing language, just as if they had done him some great service. Arthur came back to us. "It

looks rather ridiculous," he said abruptly, "to see the procession of this horse and dog-cart following your phaeton. Hadn't I better drive on to Penrith?"

"The look of it does not matter here, surely," says Bell. "We have only met two persons since we started, and we sha'n't find many people up in this moorland we are coming to."

"Oh, as you please," says the young man, a trifle mollified. "If you don't mind, of course I don't."

Presently he said, with something of an effort, "How long is your journey to last, altogether?"

"I don't know," I say to him. "We shall be in Edinburgh in two or three days, and our project of driving thither accomplished. But we may spend a week or two in Scotland after that."

"Count von Rosen is very anxious to see something of Scotland," says Bell with the air of a person conveying information.

I know why Count von Rosen was so anxious to see something of Scotland: he would have welcomed a journey to the North Pole if only he was sure that Bell was going there too. But Arthur says, somewhat sharply, "I am glad I shall escape the duty of dancing attendance on a stranger. I suppose you mean to take him to the Tower and to Madame Tussaud's when you return to London?"

"But won't you come on with us to Edinburgh, Arthur?" says Bell quite amiably.

"No, thank you," he says; and then turning to me, "How much does it cost to send a horse and trap from Carlisle to London?"

"From Edinburgh it costs ten pounds five shillings; so you may calculate."

"I suppose I can get a late train to-morrow night for myself?"

"There is one after midnight."

He spoke in a gloomy way, that had nevertheless some affectation of carelessness in it. Bell again expressed her regret that he could not accompany us to Edinburgh, but he did not answer.

We were now about to get into our respective vehicles, for before us lay a

long stretch of high moorland road, and we had been merely idling the time away during the last mile or two.

"Won't you get into the dog-cart for a bit, Bell?" says Arthur.

"Oh yes, if you like," says Bell good-naturedly.

The lieutenant, knowing nothing of this proposal, was rather astonished, when, after having called to him to stop the horses, we came up and Bell was assisted into the dog-cart, Arthur following and taking the reins. The rest of us got into the phaeton, but of course Arthur had got the start of us, and went on in front.

"How far is Greta Green in front?" asks my lady in a low voice.

The lieutenant scowled, and regarded the two figures in front of us in anything but an amiable mood.

"You do not care much for her safety to entrust her to that stupid boy," he remarks.

"Do you think he will really run away with her?" says Tita.

"Run away!" repeats the lieutenant with some scorn. "If he were to try that, or any other foolish thing, do you know what you would see? You would see mademoiselle take the reins from him and go where she pleased, in spite of him. Do you think that she is controlled by that pitiful fellow?"

Whatever control Bell possessed, there was no doubt at all that Arthur was taking her away from us at a considerable pace. After that stretch of moorland the road got very hilly, and no man who is driving his own horses likes to run them up steep ascents for the mere pleasure of catching a runaway boy and his sweetheart. In the ups and downs of this route we sometimes lost sight of Bell and Arthur altogether. The lieutenant was so wroth that he dared not speak. Tita grew a little anxious, and at last she said, "Won't you drive on and overtake these young people? I am sure Arthur is forgetting how hilly the road is."

"I don't. Arthur is driving somebody else's horse, but I can't afford to ill-treat my own in order to stop him."

"I am sure your horses have not been overworked," says the lieutenant; and at this moment, as we get to the crest of a hill, we find that the two fugitives are on the top of the next incline.

"Hillo! Hei! Heh!"

Two faces turn round. A series of pantomimic gestures now conveys my lady's wishes, and we see Arthur jump down to the ground, assist Bell to alight, and then she begins to pull some grass for the horse.

When we also get to the top of this hill, lo! the wonderful sight that spreads out before us! Along the northern horizon stands a pale line of mountains, and as we look down into the great plain that lies between, the yellow light of the sunset touches a strange sort of mist, so that you would think there lay there a broad estuary or a great arm of the sea. We ourselves are in shadow, but all the wide landscape before us is bathed in golden fire and smoke, and up there, ranged along the sky, are the pale hills that stand like phantoms rising out of another world.

Bell comes into the phaeton. We set out again along the hilly road, getting comforted by and by by the landlord of a wayside inn, who says, "Ay, the road goes pretty moo'ch doon bank a' t' waay to Penrith after ye get a mile forrit." Bell cannot tell us whether this is pure Cumbrian or Cumbrian mixed with Scotch, but the lieutenant insists that it does not much matter, for "forrit" is very good Frisian. The chances are that we should have suffered another sermon on the German origin of our language, but that signs of a town became visible. We drove in from the country highways in the gathering twilight. There were lights in the streets of Penrith, but the place itself seemed to have shut up and gone to bed. It was but half-past eight, yet nearly every shop was shut, and the inn into which we drove had clearly got over its day's labor. If we had asked for dinner at this hour, the simple folks would probably have laughed at us; so we called it supper, and a very excellent supper it was

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"ADE!"

Edwin, if right I read my song,
 With slighted passion paced along,
 All in the moony light:
 'Twas near an old enchanted court,
 Where sportive fairies made resort
 To revel out the night.

"I AM so sorry you can't come farther with us than Carlisle!" says Queen Titania to Arthur, with a great kindness for the lad shining in her brown eyes.

"Duty calls me back—and pleasure, too," he says with rather a melancholy smile. "You will receive a message from me, I expect, shortly after I return. Where will letters find you in Scotland?"

This was rather a difficult question to answer, but it took us away from the dangerous subject of Arthur's intentions, about which the less said at that moment the better. The lieutenant professed a great desire to spend two or three weeks in Scotland, and Bell began to sketch out phantom-tours, whisking about from Loch Lubraig to Loch Long, cutting round the Mull of Cantire, and coming back from Oban to the Crinan in a surprising manner.

"And, mademoiselle," says he, "perhaps to-morrow, when you get into Scotland, you will begin to tell me something of the Scotch songs, if it does not trouble you. I have read some, yes, of Burns's songs, mostly through Freiligrath's translations, but I have not heard any sung, and I know that you know them all. Oh yes, I liked them very much: they are good, hearty songs, not all melancholy; and an excellent fellow of that country I met in the war—he was a correspondent for some newspaper, and he was at Metz, but he was as much of a soldier as any man of us—he told me there is not any such music as the music of the Scotch songs. That is a very bold thing to say, you know, mademoiselle, but if you will sing some of them I will give you my frank opinion."

"Very well," says mademoiselle with a gracious smile, "but I think I ought to begin to-day, for there is a great deal of ground to get over."

"So much the better," says he.

"But if you young people," says Queen

Tita, "who are all bent on your own pleasure, would let me make a suggestion, I think I can put your musical abilities to a better use. I am going to give a concert as soon as I get home for the benefit of our Clothing Club, and I want you to undertake, Count von Rosen, to sing for us two or three German songs—Körner's war-songs, for example."

"Oh, with great pleasure, madame, if you will not all laugh at my singing."

Unhappy wretch—another victim! But it was a mercy she asked him only for a few songs, instead of hinting something about a contribution. That was probably to come.

"Bell," says my lady, "do you think we ought to charge twopence this time?"

On this tremendous financial question Bell declined to express an opinion, beyond suggesting that the people, if they could only be induced to come, would value the concert all the more. A much more practical proposal, however, is placed before this committee now assembled in Penrith. At each of these charity-concerts in our school-room a chamber is set apart for the display of various viands and an uncommon quantity of champagne, devoted to the use of the performers, their friends and a few special guests. It is suggested that the expense of this entertainment should not always fall upon one person, there being several householders in the neighborhood who were much more able to afford such promiscuous banquets.

"I am sure," says my lady with some emphasis, "that I know several gentlemen who would only be too eager to come forward and send these refreshments, if they only knew you were making such a fuss about it."

"My dear," I say humbly, "I wish you would speak to them on this subject."

"I wouldn't demean myself so far," says Tita, "as to ask for wine and biscuits from my neighbors."

"I wish these neighbors wouldn't drink so much of my champagne."

"But it is a charity: why should you grumble?" says the lieutenant.

"Why? These abandoned ruffians

and their wives give five shillings to the charity, and come and eat and drink ten shillings' worth of my food and wine. That is why."

"Never mind," says Bell with her gentle voice: "when Count von Rosen comes to sing we shall have a great audience, and there will be a lot of money taken at the door, and we shall be able to clear all expenses and pay you, too, for the champagne."

"At sevenpence-halfpenny a bottle, I suppose?"

"I did not think you got it so cheap," says Tita with a pleasing look of innocence; and therewith the young folks began to laugh, as they generally do when she says anything specially impertinent.

Just before starting for Carlisle we happened to be in the old churchyard of Penrith, looking at the pillars which are supposed to mark the grave of a giant of old, and trying to persuade ourselves that we saw something like Runic carvings on the stones. There came forward to us a strange-looking person, who said suddenly, "God bless you!"

There was no harm in that, at all events, but presently he began to attach himself to Arthur, and insisted on talking to him, and whenever the young man seemed inclined to resent this intrusion, the mysterious stranger put in another "God bless you!" so as to disarm criticism. We speedily discovered that this person was a sort of whiskified Old Mortality, who claimed to have cut all manner of tombstones standing around; and to Arthur, whom he specially affected, he continually appealed with "Will that do, eh? I did that—will that do, eh?" The young man was not in a communicative mood, to begin with, but the persecution he now suffered was like to have driven him wild. In vain he moved away: the other followed him. In vain he pretended not to listen: the other did not care. He would probably have expressed his feelings warmly, but for the pious ejaculation which continually came in; and when a man says "God bless you!" you can't with decency wish him the reverse. At length, out of

pure compassion, the lieutenant went over to the man, and said, "Well, you are a very wicked old gentleman to have been drinking at this time in the morning."

"God bless you!"

"Thank you. You have given to us your blessing all around: now will you kindly go away?"

"Wouldn't you like to see a bit of my cutting now, eh?"

"No, I wouldn't. I would like to see you go home and get a sleep, and get up sober."

"God bless you!"

"The same to you. Good-bye;" and, behold! Arthur was delivered, and returned, blushing like a girl, to the women, who had been rather afraid of this half-tipsy or half-silly person, and remained at a distance.

You may be sure that when we were about to start from Penrith the lieutenant did not forget to leave out Bell's guitar-case. And so soon as we were well away from the town, and bowling along the level road that leads up to Carlisle, the girl put the blue ribbon round her shoulder and began to cast about for a song. Arthur was driving close behind us, occasionally sending on the cob so as to exchange a remark or two with my lady. The wheels made no great noise, however, and in the silence lying over the shining landscape around us we heard the clear, full, sweet tones of Bell's voice as well as if she had been singing in a room.

Behind yon hills where Lugar flows.

That was the first song that she sung; and it was well the lieutenant was not a Scotchman, and had never heard the air as it is daily played on the Clyde steamers by wandering fiddlers.

"I don't mean to sing all the songs," says Bell presently. "I shall only give you a verse or so of each of those I know, so that you may judge of them. Now this is a fighting song;" and with that she sung with fine courage—

Here's Kenmure's health in wine, Willie!

Here's Kenmure's health in wine!

There ne'er was a coward o' Kenmure's blood,
Nor yet o' Gordon's lire!

Oh, Kenmure's lads are men, Willie!
 Oh, Kenmure's lads are men!
 Their hearts and swords are metal true,
 And that their foes shall ken!

How was it that she always sang these wild, rebellious Jacobite songs with so great an accession of spirit? Never in our southern home had she seemed to care anything about them. There the only Scotch songs she used to sing for us were the plaintive laments of unhappy lovers, and such like things; whereas now she was all for blood and slaughter, for the gathering of the clans and the general destruction of law and order. I don't believe she knew who Kenmure was. As for the braes o' Mar and Callander and Airlie, she had never seen one of these places. And what was this "Kane" of which she sang so proudly?—

Hark the horn!
 Up i' the morn:
 Bonnie lad, come to the march to-morrow!
 Down the glen,
 Grant and his men,
 They shall pay Kane to the king the morn!
 Down by Knockhaspie,
 Down by Gillespie,
 Many a red runt nods the horn;
 Waken not Callum,
 Rouky nor Allan—
 They shall pay Kane to the king the morn!

"Why, what a warlike creature you have become, Bell!" says Queen Titania. "Ever since you sang those songs of Maria, with Count von Rosen as the old Sergeant, you seem to have forgotten all the pleasant old ballads of melancholy and regret, and taken to nothing but fire and sword. Now, if you were to sing about Logan Braes, or Lucy's Flitting, or Annie's Tryst—"

"I am coming to them," says Bell wearily.

"No, mademoiselle," interposes the lieutenant, "please do not sing any more just now. You will sing again in the afternoon—yes? But at present you will harm your voice to sing too much."

Now, she had only sung snatches of three songs: what business had he to interfere and become her guardian? Yet you should have seen how quietly and naturally she laid aside the guitar as soon as he had spoken, and how she handed it to him to put in the case. My

lady looked hard at her gloves, which she always does when she is inwardly laughing and determined that no smile shall appear on her face.

It was rather hard upon Arthur that he should be banished into that solitary trap, but he rejoined us when we stopped at High Heskett to bait the horses and have a snack of something for lunch. What a picture of desolation is the White Ox of this village! Once upon a time this broad road formed part of the great highway leading toward the North, and here the coaches stopped for the last time before driving into Carlisle. It is a large hostelry, but it had such an appearance of loneliness and desertion about it that we stopped at the front door (which was shut) to ask whether they could put the horses up. An old lady, dressed in black and with a worn and sad face, appeared. We could put the horses up, yes. As for luncheon, we could have ham and eggs. The butcher only came to the place twice a week, and as no traveler stopped here now, no butcher's meat was kept on the premises. We went into the great stables, and found a hostler, who looked at us with a wonderful astonishment shining in his light-blue eyes. Looking at the empty stalls, he said he could remember when forty horses were put up there every day. It was the railways that had done it.

We had our ham and eggs in a large and melancholy parlor filled with old-fashioned pictures and ornaments. The elderly servant-woman who waited on us told us that a gentleman had stopped at the inn on the Monday night before; but it turned out that he was walking to Carlisle, that he had got afraid of two navvies on the road, and that he therefore had taken a bed here. Before him, no one had stopped at the inn since Whitsuntide. It was all because of them railways.

We hastened away from this doleful and deserted inn so soon as the horses were rested. They had easy work of it for the remainder of the day's journey. The old coach-road is here remarkably broad, level and well made, and we

bowled along the solitary highway as many a vehicle had done in bygone years. As we drove into "merry Carlisle" the lamps were lit in the twilight, and there were numbers of people in the streets. For the convenience of Arthur we put up at a hotel abutting on the railway-station, and then went off to stable the horses elsewhere.

It was rather a melancholy dinner we had in a corner of the great room. The gloom that overspread Arthur's face was too obvious. In vain the lieutenant talked profoundly to us of the apple-legend of Tell in its various stages and appearances (he had just been cribbing his knowledge from Professor Büchheim), and said he would go with my lady next morning to see the famous market-place where William of Cloudeslee, who afterward shot the apple from off his son's head, was rescued from justice by two of his fellow-outlaws. Tita was far more concerned to see Arthur in somewhat better spirits on this the last night of his being with us. On our sitting down to dinner she had said to him with a pretty smile,

King Arthur lives in merry Carlisle,
And seemly is to see;
And there with him Queen Guenever,
That bride so bright of blee.

But was it not an unfortunate quotation, however kindly meant? Queen Guenever sat there as frank and gracious and beautiful as a queen or a bride might be, but not with him. That affair of the little blue flower on the banks of the Greta was still rankling in his mind.

He bore himself bravely, however. He would not have the women remain up to see him away by the 12.45 train. He bade good-bye to both of them without wincing, and looked after Bell for a moment as she left; and then he went away into a large and gloomy smoking-room and sat down there in silence. The lieutenant and I went with him. He was not inclined to speak; and at length Von Rosen, apparently to break the horrible spell of the place, said, "Will they give the horse any corn or water on the journey?"

"I don't think so," said the lad ab-

sently, "but I have telegraphed for a man to be at the station and take the cob into the nearest stables."

And with that he forced himself to talk of some of his adventures by the way while as yet he was driving by himself, though we could see he was thinking of something very different. At last the train from the North came in. He shook hands with us with a fine indifference, and we saw him bundle himself up in a corner of the carriage with a cigar in his mouth. There was nothing tragic in his going away, and yet there was not in all England a more wretched creature than the young man who thus started on his lonely night-journey; and I afterward heard that up in the railway-hotel at this moment one tender heart was still beating a little more quickly at the thought of his going, and two wakeful eyes were full of unconscious tears.

CHAPTER XXIX.

OVER THE BORDER.

And here a while the Muse,
High hovering o'er the broad cerulean scene,
Sees Caledonia in romantic view:
Her airy mountains, from the waving main
Invested with a keen, diffusive sky,
Breathing the soul acute; her forests huge,
Incult, robust and tall, by Nature's hand
Planted of old; her azure lakes between
Poured out expansive, and of watery wealth
Full; winding, deep, and green her fertile vales;
With many a cool, translucent, brimming flood
Washed lovely from the Tweed (pure parent stream,
Whose pastoral banks first heard my Doric reed,
With sylvan Qued, thy tributary brook).

THAT next morning in Carlisle, as we walked about the red old city that is set amid beautiful green meadows interlaced with streams, there was something about Queen Titania's manner that I could not understand. She arrogated to herself a certain importance. She treated ordinary topics of talk with disdain. She had evidently become possessed of a great secret. Now, every one knows that the best way to discover a secret is to let the owner of it alone: if it is of great importance, she is sure to tell it you, and if it is of no importance, your ignorance of it won't hurt you.

We were up in that fine old castle,

leaning on the parapets of red sandstone and gazing away up in the North, where a line of Scotch hills lay on the horizon. That is a pretty landscape that lies around Carlisle Castle—the bright and grassy meadows through which the Eden winds, the woods and heights of the country beyond, the far stretches of sand at the mouth of the Solway, and the blue line of hills telling of the wilder regions of the North.

In the courtyard below us we can see the lieutenant instructing Bell in the art of fortification. My lady looks at them for a moment, and says, "Bell is near her North Country at last."

There was, at all events, nothing very startling in that disclosure. She pauses for a moment or two, and is apparently regarding with wistful eyes the brilliant landscape around, across which dashes of shadow are slowly moving from the west. Then she adds, "I suppose you are rather puzzled to account for Arthur's coming up to see us this last time."

"I never try to account for the insane actions of young people in love."

"That is your own experience, I suppose?" she says daintily.

"Precisely so—of you. But what is this about Arthur?"

"Don't you really think it looks absurd, his having come to join us a second time for no apparent purpose whatever?"

"Proceed."

"Oh," she says with some little *hauteur*, "I am not anxious to tell you anything."

"But I am dying to hear. Have you not marked my impatience ever since we set out this morning?"

"No, I haven't. But I will tell you all the same, if you promise to say not a word of it to Count von Rosen."

"I? Say anything to the lieutenant? The man who would betray the confidences of his wife, except when it suited him to do so— But what have you got to say about Arthur?"

"Only this—that his coming to see us was not so purposeless as it might appear. Yesterday he asked Bell definitely if she would marry him." She smiles with an air of pride. She knows she

has produced a sensation. "Would you like to know where? In that old inn at High Hesket, where they seem to have been left alone for a minute or two. And Bell told him frankly that she could not marry him."

Think of it! In that deserted old inn, with its forsaken chambers and empty stalls, and occasional visits from wandering butchers, a tragedy had been enacted so quietly that none of us had known. If folks were always to transact the most important business of their lives in this quiet, undramatic, unobserved way, whence would come all the material for our pictures and plays and books? These young people, so far as we knew, had never struck an attitude nor uttered an exclamation; for, now that one had time to remember, on our entering into the parlor where Bell and Arthur had been left, she was quietly looking out of the window, and he came forward to ask how many miles it was to Carlisle. They got into the vehicles outside as if nothing had happened. They chatted as usual on the road into Carlisle. Nay, at dinner how did those young hypocrites manage to make believe that they were on their old footing, so as to deceive us all?

"My dear," I say to her, "we have been robbed of a scene."

"I am glad there was no scene. There is more likely to be a scene when Arthur goes back and tells Dr. Ashburton that he means to marry Katty Tatham. He is sure to do that; and you know the doctor was very much in favor of Arthur's marrying Bell."

"Well now, I suppose all that is wanted for the completion of your diabolical project is that Bell should marry that young Prussian down there, who will be arrested in a minute or two if he does not drop his inquiries."

Tita looks up with a stare of well-affected surprise: "That is quite another matter, I assure you. You may be quite certain that Bell did not refuse Count von Rosen before without some very good reason; and the mere fact of Arthur's going away does not pledge her a bit. No, quite the contrary. He would

be very foolish if he asked her at this moment to become his wife. She is very sorry about Arthur, and so am I; but I confess that when I learned his case was hopeless, and that I could do nothing to help him, I was greatly relieved. But don't breathe a word of what I have told you to Count von Rosen: Bell would never forgive me if it were to reach his ears. But oh," says Queen Tita, almost clasping her hands, while a bright light beams over her face, "I *should* like to see those two married. I am sure they are so fond of each other. Can you doubt it if you look at them for a moment or two?"

But they had disappeared from the courtyard below. Almost at the same moment that she uttered these words she instinctively turned, and lo! there were Bell and her companion advancing to join us. The poor little woman blushed dreadfully in spite of all her assumption of gracious self-possession, but it was apparent that the young folks had not overheard, and no harm was done.

At length we started for Gretna. There might have been some obvious jokes going upon this subject had not some recollection of Arthur interfered. Was it because of his departure also that the lieutenant forbore to press Bell for the Scotch songs that she had promised him? Or was it not rather that the brightness and freshness of this rare forenoon were in themselves sufficient exhilaration? We drove down by the green meadows and over the Eden bridge. We clambered up the hill opposite, and drove past the suburban villas there. We had got so much accustomed to sweet perfumes floating to us from the hedgerows and the fields that we at first did not perceive that certain specially pleasant odors were the product of some large nurseries close by. Then we got out to that "shedding" of the roads which marks the junction of the highways coming down from Glasgow and Edinburgh; and here we chose the former, which would take us through Gretna and Moffat, leaving us to strike eastward toward Edinburgh afterward.

The old mail-coach road to the North is quite deserted now, but it is a pleasant road for all that, well made and smooth, with tracts of grass along each side, and tall and profuse hedges that only partially hide from view the dusky northern landscape with its blue line of hills beyond, mile after mile: however, we did not meet a single creature on this deserted highway; and when at length we reached a solitary turnpike, the woman in charge thereof regarded us with a look of surprise, as if we were a party of runaways who had blundered into the notion that Gretna-Green marriages were still possible.

The lieutenant, who was driving, got talking with the woman about these marriages, and the incidents that must have occurred at this very turnpike, and of the stories in the neighborhood about that picturesque and gay old time. She—with her eyes still looking toward our Bell, as if she suspected that the young man had quite an exceptional interest in talking of marriages—told us some of her own reminiscences with a great deal of good-humor; but it is sad to think that these anecdotes were chiefly of quarrels and separations—some of them occurring before the happy pair had crossed the first bridge on their homeward route. Whether these stories were not edifying, or whether a great bank of clouds coming up from the north against the wind looked very ominous, Bell besought her companion to drive on; and so on we went.

It was a lonely place in which to be caught by a thunder-storm. We came to the river Esk, and found its shallow waters flowing down a broad and shingly channel, leaving long islands of sand between. There was not a house in sight—only the marshy meadows, the riverbeds and the low flats of sand stretching out to the Solway Frith. Scotland was evidently bent on giving us a wet welcome. From the hills in the north those black masses of vapor came crowding up; and a strange silence fell over the land. Then a faint glimmer of red appeared somewhere, and a low noise was heard. Presently, a long, narrow streak

of forked lightning went darting across the black background, there was a smart roll of thunder, and then all around us the first clattering of heavy rain was heard among the leaves. We had the hood put up hastily. Bell and Tita were speedily swathed in shawls and water-proofs, and the lieutenant sent the horses on at a good pace, hoping to reach Gretna Green before we should be washed into the Solway. Then began the wild play of the elements. On all sides of us, it seemed, the bewildering glare of steel-blue flashed about, and the horses, terrified by the terrific peals of thunder, went plunging on through the torrents of rain.

"Mademoiselle," cried the lieutenant, with the water streaming over his face and down his great beard, "your Westmoreland rain—it was nothing to this."

Bell sat mute and patient, with her face down to escape the blinding torrents. Perhaps, had we crossed the Border in beautiful weather, she would have got down from the phaeton and pulled some pretty flower to take away with her as a memento; but now we could see nothing, hear nothing, think of nothing but the crashes of the thunder, the persistent waterfall, and those sudden glares that from time to time robbed us of our eyesight for several seconds. Some little time before reaching the river Sark, which is here the boundary-line between the two countries, we passed a small wayside inn, but we did not think of stopping there when Gretna promised to afford us more certain shelter. We drove on and over the Sark. We pulled up for a moment at the famous toll-house.

"We are over the Border!" cried Bell as we drove on again, but what of Scotland could she see in this wild storm of rain?

Surely no runaway lover was ever more glad to see that small church perched up on a hillock among trees than we were when we came in sight of Gretna. But where was the inn? There were a few cottages by the wayside, and there was one woman who kindly came out to look at us. No sooner had the lieutenant

heard that there was no inn in the place, than, without a word, but with an awful look of determination on his face, he turned the horses clean round and set them off at a gallop down the road to the Sark.

"Perhaps they can't take us in at that small place," said my lady.

"They must take us in," said he between his teeth; and with that we found ourselves in England again.

He drove us up to the front of the square building. With his whip-hand he dashed away the rain from his eyes and moustache, and called aloud. Lo! what strange vision was that which appeared to us in this lonely place in the middle of a storm? Through the mist of the rain we beheld the doorway of the inn suddenly becoming the frame of a beautiful picture, and the picture was that of a fair-haired and graceful young creature of eighteen, in a costume of pearly gray touched here and there with lines of blue, who regarded us with a winning expression of wonder and pity in her large and innocent eyes. Her appearance there seemed like a glimmer of sunlight shining through the rain, and a second or two elapsed before the lieutenant could collect himself so far as to ask whether this angel of deliverance could not shelter us from the rude violence of the storm.

"We have no hostler," says the young lady in a timid way.

"Have you any stables?" says the young man.

"Yes, we have stables. Shall I show them to you?"

"No, no, no!" he cries quite vehemently. "Don't you come out into the rain—not at all! I will find them out very well myself; but you must take in the ladies here and get them dry."

And when we had consigned Bell and Tita to the care of the young lady, who received them with a look of much friendliness and concern in her pretty face, we went off and sought out the stables.

"Now, look here, my good friend," says Von Rosen, "we are both wet. The horses have to be groomed—that is

very good work to dry one person—and so you go into the house and change your clothes, and I will see after the horses—yes?”

“My young friend, it is no use, your being very complaisant to me,” I observe to him. “I don’t mean to intercede with Bell for you.”

“Would you intercede with that beautiful young lady of the inn for me? Well, now, that is a devil of a language, yours. How am I to address a girl who is a stranger to me, and to whom I wish to be respectful? I cannot call her *Mademoiselle*, which is only an old nickname that *mademoiselle* used to have in Bonn, as you know. You tell me I cannot address a young lady as ‘Miss’ without mentioning her other name, and I do not know it. Yet I cannot address her with nothing, as if she were a servant. Tell me now: what does an English gentleman say to a young lady whom he may assist at a railway-station abroad, and does not know her name? And what, if he does not catch her name, when he is introduced in a house? He cannot say *Mademoiselle*. He cannot say *Fräulein*. He cannot say *Miss*.”

“He says nothing at all.”

“But that is rudeness: it is awkward to you not to be able to address her.”

“Why are you so anxious to know how to talk to this young lady?”

“Because I mean to ask her if it is impossible that she can get a little corn for the horses.”

It was tiresome work, that getting the horses out of the wet harness and grooming them without the implements of grooming. Moreover, we could find nothing but a handful of hay, and it was fortunate that the nose-bags we had with us still contained a small allowance of oats and beans.

What a comfortable little family-party, however, we made up in the great, warm kitchen! Tita had struck up a great friendship with the gentle and pretty daughter of the house; the old lady, her mother, was busy in having our wraps and rugs hung up to dry before the capacious fireplace; and the servant-maid had begun to cook some chops for us.

Bell, too—who might have figured as the elder sister of this flaxen-haired and frank-eyed creature who had appeared to us in the storm—was greatly interested in her; and was much pleased to hear her distinctly and proudly claim to be Scotch, although it was her misfortune to live a short distance on the wrong side of the Border. And with that the two girls fell to talking about Scotch and Cambrian words; but here Bell had a tremendous advantage, and pushed it to such an extreme that her opponent, with a pretty blush and a laugh, said that she did not know the English young ladies knew so much of Scotch. And when Bell protested that she would not be called English, the girl only stared. You see, she had never had the benefit of hearing the lieutenant discourse on the history of Strathclyde.

Well, we had our chops and what not in the parlor of the inn, but it was remarkable how soon the lieutenant proposed that we should return to the kitchen. He pretended that he was anxious to learn Scotch, and affected a profound surprise that the young lady of the inn should not know the meaning of the word “spurtle.” When we went into the kitchen, however, it was to the mamma that he addressed himself chiefly; and, behold! she speedily revealed to the young soldier that she was the widow of one of the *Gretna* priests. More than that I don’t mean to say. Some of you young fellows who may read this might perhaps like to know the name and the precise whereabouts of the fair wild flower that we found blooming up in these remote solitudes, but neither shall be revealed. If there was any one of us who fell in love with the sweet and gentle face, it was Queen Tita; and I know not what compacts about photographs may not have been made between the two women.

Meanwhile, the lieutenant had established himself as a great favorite with the elderly lady, and by and by she left the kitchen and came back with a sheet of paper in her hand, which she presented to him. It turned out to be one of the forms of the marriage certificates

used by her husband in former days; and for curiosity's sake I append it below, suppressing the name of the priest for obvious reasons:

KINGDOM OF SCOTLAND,
COUNTY OF DUMFRIES,
PARISH OF GRETNA.

THESE ARE TO CERTIFY to all to whom these presents shall come, that ——— from the parish of ——— in the County of ———, and ——— from the parish of ——— in the County of ———, being now here present, and having declared themselves single persons, were this day Married after the manner of the Laws of the Church of England, and agreeable to the Laws of Scotland; as Witness our hands, Allison's Bank Toll-house, this ——— day of ———, 18—.

Before ——— { _____

WITNESSES, { _____

"That is a dangerous paper to carry about w' ye," said the old woman, with a smile.

"Why so?" inquired the lieutenant.

"Because ye might be tempted to ask a young leddy to sign her name there;" and what should prevent that innocent-eyed girl turning just at this moment to look with a pleased smile at our Bell? The lieutenant laughed in an embarrassed way, and said the rugs might as well be taken from before the fire, as they were quite dry now.

I think none of us would have been sorry to have stayed the night in this homely and comfortable little inn, but we wished to get on to Locherbie, so as to reach Edinburgh in other two days. Moreover, the clouds had broken, and there was a pale glimmer of sunshine appearing over the dark-green woods and meadows. We had the horses put into the phaeton again, and with many a friendly word of thanks to the good people who had been so kind to us, we started once more to cross the Border.

"And what do you think of the first Scotch family you have seen?" says Queen Tita to the lieutenant as we cross the bridge again.

"Madame," he says quite earnestly, "I did dream for a moment I was in Germany again—everything so friendly and homely, and the young lady not too proud to wait on you and help the servant in the cooking; and then, when that is over, to talk to you with good education and intelligence, and great simpleness and frankness. Oh, that is very good—whether it is Scotch or German or any other country—the simple ways and the friendliness, and the absence of all the fashions and the hypocrisy."

"That young lady was very fashionably dressed, Count von Rosen," says Tita with a smile.

"That is nothing, madame. Did she not bring in to us our dinner, just as the daughter of the house in a German country-inn would do, as a compliment to you, and not to let the servant come in? Is it debasement, do you think? No. You do respect her for it; and you yourself, madame, you did speak to her as if she were an old friend of yours. And why not, when you find people like that, honest and good-willing toward you?"

What demon of mischief was it that prompted Bell to sing that song as we drove through the darkening woods in this damp twilight? The lieutenant had just got out her guitar for her when he was led into these fierce statements quoted above. And Bell, with a great gravity, sang—

Farewell to Glenshalloch, a farewell for ever,
Farewell to my wee cot that stands by the river;
The fall is loud sounding in voices that vary,
And the echoes surrounding lament with my Mary.

This much may be said, that the name of the young lady of whom they had been speaking was also Mary; and the lieutenant, divining some profound sarcasm in the song, began to laugh and protest that it was not because the girl was pretty and gentle that he had discovered so much excellence in the customs of Scotch households. Then Bell sang once more, as the sun went down

behind the woods, and we heard the streams murmuring in deep valleys by the side of the road—

Hame, hame, hame! Oh hame fain would I be,
Hame, hame, hame, to my ain countree:
Here's an eye that ever weeps, and a fair face will
be fain
As I pass through Anan Water wi' my bonny bands
again!

We drive into the long village of Ecclefechan, and pause for a moment or two in front of the Bush Inn to let the horses have a draught of water and oatmeal. The lieutenant, who has descended to look after this prescription, now comes out from the inn bearing a small tray with some tumblers on it. "Madame," said he, "here is Scotch whisky: you must all drink it, for the good of the country."

"And of ourselves," says one of us, calling attention to the chill dampness of the night-air.

My lady pleaded for a bit of sugar, but that was not allowed; and when she had been induced to take about a third of the lieutenant's preparation, she put down the glass with an air of having done her duty. As for Bell, she drank pretty nearly half the quantity; and the chances are that if the lieutenant had handed her prussic acid she would have felt herself bound, as a compliment, to have accepted it.

Darker and darker grew the landscape as we drove through the thick woods, and when at last we got into Locherbie there was scarcely enough light of any sort to show us that the town, like most Scotch country-towns and villages, was whitewashed. In the inn at which we stopped, appropriately named the Blue Bell, the lieutenant once more remarked on the exceeding homeliness and friendliness of the Scotch. The landlord simply adopted us, and gave us advice in a

grave, paternal fashion about what we should have for supper. The waiter who attended us took quite a friendly interest in our trip, and said he would himself go and see that the horses which had accomplished such a feat were being properly looked after. Bell was immensely proud that she could understand one or two phrases that were rather obscure to the rest of the party; and the lieutenant still further delighted her by declaring that he wished we could travel for months through this friendly land, which reminded him of his own country. Perhaps the inquisitive reader, having learned that we drank Scotch whisky at the Bush Inn of Ecclefechan, would like to know what we drank at the Blue Bell of Locherbie. He may address a letter to Queen Titania on that subject, and he will doubtless receive a perfectly frank answer.

[*Note by Queen Titania.*—I do not see why our Bell should be made the chief subject of all the foregoing revelations. I will say this, that she and myself were convinced that we never saw two men *more jealous of each other* than those two were in that inn near the Borders. The old lady was *quite amused by it*, but I do not think the girl herself noticed it, for she is a very innocent and gentle young thing, and has probably had no experience of such *absurdities*. But I would like to ask, Who first mentioned that subject of photographs, and who proposed to send her a whole series of engravings, and who offered to send her a volume of German songs? If Arthur had been there, we should have had the laugh all on our side; but now I suppose they will deny that anything of the kind took place—with the ordinary candor of gentlemen who are *found out*.]



PART XI.

CHAPTER XXX.

TWEED SIDE.

Ah, happy Lycius!—for she was a maid
More beautiful than ever twisted braid,
Or sighed or blushed, or on spring-flowered lea
Spread a green kirtle to the minstrelsy—
A virgin, purest-lipped, yet in the lore
Of love deep learned to the red heart's core.

THE very first object that we saw, on this the first morning of our waking in Scotland, was a small boy of seven or eight, brown-faced, yellow-haired, bare-footed, who was marching along in the sunlight with a bag of school-books on his back about as big as himself.

"Oh, the brave little fellow!" cries Tita, regarding him from the door of the inn with a great softness in her brown eyes. "Don't you think he will be lord chancellor some day?"

The future lord chancellor went steadily on, his small brown feet taking no heed of the stones in the white road.

"I think," says Tita, suddenly plunging her hand into her pocket—"I think I should like to give him a shilling."

"No, madam," says one of us to her, sternly, "you shall not bring into this free land the corrupting influences of the South. It is enough that you have debased the district around your own home. If you offered that young patriot a shilling, he would turn again and rend you. But if you offered him a halfpenny, now, to buy boots—"

At this moment, somehow or other, Bell and our lieutenant appear together, and before we know where we are the girl has darted across the street in pursuit of the boy.

"What are boots?" asks the lieutenant, gravely.

"Objects of interest to the youthful student."

Then we see, in the white glare of the sun, a wistful, small, fair and sunburnt face turned up to that tall young lady with the voluminous brown hair. She is apparently talking to him, but in a dif-

ferent tongue from his own, and he looks frightened. Then the sunlight glitters on two white coins, and Bell pats him kindly on the shoulder; and doubtless the little fellow proceeds on his way to school in a sort of wild and wonderful dream, having an awful sense that he has been spoken to by a fair and gracious princess.

"As I live," says my lady, with a great surprise, "she has given him two half-crowns!"

Queen Titania looks at me. There is a meaning in her look—partly interrogation, partly conviction, and wholly kind and pleasant. It has dawned upon her that girls who have to earn their own pocket-money, as Bell virtually does, do not give away five shillings to a passing schoolboy without some profound emotional cause. Bell comes across the way, looking vastly pleased and proud, but somehow avoiding our eyes. She would have gone into the inn, but that my lady's majestic presence (you could have fanned her out of the way with a butterfly's wing) barred the entrance.

"Have you been for a walk this morning, Bell?" she says with a fine air of indifference.

"Yes, madame," replies our Uhlan. As if he had any business to answer for Bell!

"Where did you go?"

"Oh," says the girl, with some confusion, "we went—we went away from the town a little way: I don't exactly know—"

And with that she escaped into the inn.

"Madame," says the lieutenant with a great apparent effort, while he keeps his eyes looking toward the pavement, and there is a brief touch of extra color in his brown face—"Madame—I—I am asked—indeed, mademoiselle she was good enough—she is to be my wife; and she did ask me if I would tell you—"

And somehow he put out his hand—just as a German boy shakes hands with you, in a timid fashion, after you have tipped him at school—and took Tita's hand in his, as if to thank her for a great gift. And the little woman was so touched and so mightily pleased that I thought she would have kissed him before my very face, in the open streets of Locherbie. All this scene, you must remember, took place on the doorstep of an odd little inn in a small Scotch country town. There were few spectators. The sun was shining down on the white fronts of the cottages and blinking on the windows. A cart of hay stood opposite to us, with the horse slowly munching inside his nose-bag. We ourselves were engaged in peacefully waiting for breakfast when the astounding news burst upon us.

"Oh, I am very glad indeed, Count von Rosen!" says Tita; and, sure enough, there was gladness written all over her face and in her eyes. And then in a minute she had sneaked away from us, and I knew she had gone to seek Bell, and stroke her hair and put her arms round her neck, and say, "Oh, my dear!" with a little sob of delight.

Well, I turn to the lieutenant. Young men, when they have been accepted, wear a most annoying air of self-satisfaction. Under no other circumstances do they look so like a turkey-cock, which is not a lovely animal.

"Touching those settlements," I say to him, "have you any remark to make?"

The young man begins to laugh.

"It is no laughing matter. I am Bell's guardian. You have not got my consent yet."

"We can do without it: it is not an opera," he says with some more of that insolent coolness. "But you would be pleased to prevent the marriage—yes? For I have seen it often, that you are more jealous of mademoiselle than of any one; and it is a wonder to me that you did not interfere before. But as for madame, now—yes, she is my very good friend, and has helped me very much,"

Such is the gratitude of those conceited young fellows, and their penetration

too! If he had but known that only a few days before Tita had taken a solemn vow to help Arthur by every means in her power, so as to atone for any injustice she might have done him!

But all at once he says, with quite a burst of eloquence (for him), "My dear friend, how am I to thank you for all this? I did not know when I proposed to come to England that this holiday tour would bring to me so much happiness. It does appear to me I am grown very rich—so rich I should like to give something to everybody this morning, and make every one happy as myself—"

"Just as Bell gave the boy five shillings? All right! When you get to Edinburgh you can buy Tita a Scotch collie: she is determined to have a collie, because Mrs. Quinet got a prize for one at the Crystal Palace. Come in to breakfast."

Bell was sitting there with her face in shadow, and Tita, laughing in a very affectionate way, standing beside her with her hands on the girl's shoulder. Bell did not look up—nothing was said. A very friendly waiter put breakfast on the table. The landlord dropped in to bid us good-morning and see that we were comfortable. Even the hostler—the lieutenant told us afterward—of this Scotch inn had conversed with him in a shrewd, homely and sensible fashion, treating him as a young man who would naturally like to have the advice of his elders.

The young people were vastly delighted with the homely ways of this Scotch inn, and began to indulge in vague theories about parochial education, independence of character and the hardihood of northern races; all tending to the honor and glory of Scotland. You would have thought, to hear them go on in this fashion, that all the good of the world, and all its beauty and kindliness, were concentrated in the Scotch town of Locherbie, and that in Locherbie no place was so much the pet of fortune as the Blue Bell Inn.

"And to think," says Bell with a gentle regret, "that to-morrow is the last day of our driving!"

"But not the last of our holiday, *made-moiselle*," says the lieutenant. "Is it necessary that any of us goes back to England for a week or two, or a month, or two months?"

Of course the pair of them would have liked very well to start off on another month's excursion, just as this one was finished. But parents and guardians have their duties. Very soon they would be in a position to control their own actions, and then they would be welcome to start for *Kamtschatka*.

All that could be said in praise of Scotland had been said in the inn; and now, as *Castor and Pollux* took us away from *Locherbie* into the hillier regions of *Dumfriesshire*, our young people were wholly at a loss for words to describe their delight. It was a glorious day, to begin with, a light breeze tempering the hot sunlight, and blowing about the perfume of sweet-brier from the fronts of the stone cottages, and bringing us warm and resinous odors from the woods of larch and spruce. We crossed deep glens, along the bottom of which ran clear brown streams over beds of pebbles. The warm light fell on the sides of those rocky clefts and lit up the masses of young rowan trees and the luxuriant ferns along the moist banks. There was a richly-cultivated and undulating country lying all around; but few houses, and those chiefly farmhouses. Far beyond, the rounded hills of *Moffatt* rose soft and blue into the white sky. Then, in the stillness of the bright day, we came upon a wayside school; and as it happened to be dinner-time, we stopped to see the stream of little ones come out. It was a pretty sight, under the shadow of the trees, to see that troop of children come into the country road, most of them being girls in extremely white pinafores, and nearly all of them, boys and girls, being yellow-haired, clear-eyed, healthy children, who kept very silent and stared shyly at the horses and the phaeton. All the younger ones had bare feet, stained with the sun, and their yellow hair—which looked almost white by the side of their berry-brown cheeks—was free from cap or bonnet. They did not say,

"Chuck us a 'apenny." They did not raise a cheer as we drove off. They stood by the side of the road, close by the hawthorn hedge, looking timidly after us; and the last that we saw of them was that they had got into the middle of the path and were slowly going off home, a small, bright and various-colored group under the soft green twilight of an avenue of trees.

As we drove on through the clear, warm day, careless and content, the two women had all the talking to themselves; and a strange use they made of their opportunities. If the guardian angels of those two creatures happen to have any sense of laughter, they must have laughed as they looked down and overheard. You may remember that when it was first proposed to take this Prussian lieutenant with us on our summer tour, both *Bell* and my lady professed the most deadly hatred of the German nation, and were nearly weeping tears over the desolate condition of France. That was about six months before. Now, thirty millions of people, either in the south or north of Europe, don't change their collective character—if such a thing exists—within the space of six months; but on this bright morning you would have fancied that the women were vying with each other to prove that all the domestic virtues, and all the science and learning of civilization, and all the arts that beautify life, were the exclusive property of the Teutons. Now, my lady was a later convert—had she not made merry only the other day over *Bell's* naïve confession that she thought the German nation as good as the French nation?—but now that she had gone over to the enemy she altogether distanced *Bell* in the production of theories, facts, quotations and downright personal opinion. She had lived a little longer, you see, and knew more; and perhaps she had a trifle more audacity in suppressing awkward facts. At all events, the lieutenant was partly abashed and partly amused by her warm advocacy of German character, literature, music and a thousand other things, and by her endeavors to prove—out of the historical lessons she had taught her two

boys—that there had always prevailed in this country a strong antipathy to the French and all their works.

“Their language too,” I remark, to keep the ball rolling. “Observe the difference between the polished, fluent and delicate German, and the barbaric dissonance and jumble of the French! How elegant the one, how harsh the other! If you were to take Chateaubriand, now—”

“It is not fair,” says Bell. “We were talking quite seriously, and you come in to make a jest of it.”

“I don’t. Are you aware that at a lecture Coleridge gave in the Royal Institution in 1808, he solemnly thanked his Maker that he did not know a word of *that frightful jargon, the French language?*”

The women were much impressed. They would not have dared, themselves, to say a word against the French language: nevertheless, Coleridge was a person of authority. Bell looked as if she would like to have some further opinions of this sort, but Mr. Freeman had not at that time uttered his epigram about the general resemblance of a Norman farmer to “a man of Yorkshire or Lincolnshire who has somehow picked up a bad habit of talking French,” nor that other about a Norman being a Dane who, “in his sojourn in Gaul, had put on a slight French varnish, and who came into England to be washed clean again.”

“Now,” I say to Bell, “if you had only civilly asked me to join in the argument, I could have given you all sorts of testimony to the worth of the Germans and the despicable nature of the French.”

“Yes, to make the whole thing absurd,” says Bell, somewhat hurt. “I don’t think you believe anything seriously.”

“Not in national characteristics even? If not in them, what are we to believe? But I will help you all the same, Bell. Now, did you ever read a poem called ‘Hands all Round?’”

“No.”

“You never heard of a writer in the

Examiner called ‘Merlin,’ who people to this day maintain was the poet laureate of England?”

“No.”

“Well, listen :

What health to France, if France be she
Whom martial progress only charms?
Yet tell her, Better to be free
Than vanquish all the world in arms.
Her frantic city’s flashing heats
But fire, to blast, the hopes of men.
Why change the titles of your streets?
You fools, you’ll want them all again.
Hands all round!

God the tyrant’s cause confound!
To France, the wiser France, we drink, my friends,
And the great name of England, round and round!

At that time, Miss Bell, thousands of people in this country were disquieted about the possible projects of the new French government; and as it was considered that the prince-president and emperor would seek to establish his power by foreign conquest—

“This is quite a historical lecture,” says Queen Tita in an under tone.

“—and as the Napoleonic legend included the humiliation of England, many thoughtful men began to cast about for a possible ally with whom we could take the field. To which country did they turn, do you think?”

“To Germany, of course,” says Bell in the most natural way in the world.

“Listen again :

Gigantic daughter of the West
We drink to thee across the flood:
We know thee and we love thee best,
For art thou not of British blood?
Should war’s mad blast again be blown,
Permit not thou the tyrant powers
To fight thy mother here alone,
But let thy broadsides roar with ours.
Hands all round!

God the tyrant’s cause confound!
To our dear kinsmen of the West, my friends,
And the great name of England, round and round!

Bell seemed a little disappointed that America, and not Germany, had been singled out by the poet; but of course nations don’t choose allies merely to please a girl who happens to have engaged herself to marry a Prussian officer. As for him, by the way, he was at last goaded into taking up the cause of France himself, and even went the length of suggesting that peradventure ten righteous men might be found with

in the city of Paris. It was a notable concession. I had begun to despair of France. But no sooner had the lieutenant turned the tide in her favor than my lady and Bell seemed graciously disposed to be generous. Chateaubriand was not Schiller, but he was a pleasing writer. Alfred de Musset was not Heine, but he had the merit of resembling him. If Auber did not exactly reach the position of a Beethoven or a Mozart, one had listened to worse operas than the *Crown Diamonds*. In this amiable frame of mind we drove along the white road on this summer day; and after having passed the great gap in the Moffat Hills which leads through to St. Mary's Loch and all the wonders of the Ettrick and the Yarrow, we drove into Moffat itself, and found ourselves in a large hotel fronting a great sunlit and empty square.

Our young people had really conducted themselves very discreetly. All that forenoon you would scarcely have imagined that they had just made a solemn promise to marry each other; but then they had been pretty much occupied with ancient and modern history. Now, as we entered a room in the hotel, the lieutenant espied a number of flowers in a big glass vase, and without any pretence of concealment whatever he walked up to it, selected a lovely moss-rose and brought it back to Bell.

"Mademoiselle," he said in a low voice—but who could help hearing him?—"you did give to me the other day a forget-me-not: will you take this rose?"

Mademoiselle looked rather shy for a moment, but she took the rose, and—with an affectation of unconcern which did not conceal an extra touch of color in her pretty face—she said, "Oh, thank you very much!" and proceeded to put it into the bosom of her dress.

"Madame," said the lieutenant, just as if nothing had occurred, "I suppose Moffat is a sort of Scotch Baden-Baden?"

Madame in turn smiled sedately, and looked out of the window, and said that she thought it was.

When we all went out for a lounge after luncheon we discovered that if

Moffat is to be likened to Baden-Baden, it forms an exceedingly Scotch and respectable Baden-Baden. The building in which the mineral waters are drunk * looks somewhat like an educational institution, painted white and with prim white iron railings. Inside, instead of that splendid saloon of the Conversationshaus in which, amid a glare of gas, various characters, doubtful and otherwise, walk up and down and chat while their friends are losing five-franc pieces and napoleons in the adjoining chambers, we found a long and sober-looking reading-room. Moffat itself is a white, clean, wide-streeted place, and the hills around it are smooth and green, but it is very far removed from Baden-Baden. It is a good deal more proper and a great deal more dull. Perhaps we did not visit it in the height of the season, if it has got a season; but we were, at all events, not very sorry to get away from it again, and out into the hilly country beyond.

That was a pretty drive up through Annandale. As you leave Moffat the road gradually ascends into the region of the hills, and down below you lies a great valley, with the river Annan running through it, and the town of Moffat itself getting smaller in the distance. You catch a glimmer of the blue peaks of Westmoreland lying far away in the south, half hid amid silver haze. The hills around you increase in size, and yet you would not recognize the bulk of the great round slopes but for those minute specks that you can make out to be sheep, and for an occasional wasp-like creature that you suppose to be a horse. The evening draws on. The yellow light on the slopes of green becomes warmer. You arrive at a great circular chasm which is called by the country-folks the Devil's Beef-tub—a mighty hollow, the western sides of which are steeped in a soft purple shadow, while

* Bien entendu, d'ailleurs, que le but du voyage Est de prendre les eaux; c'est un compte réglé. D'eaux, je n'en ai point vu lorsque j'y suis allé; Mais qu'on n'en puisse voir, je n'en mets rien en gage, Je crois même, en honneur, que l'eau de voisinage A, quand on l'examine, un petit goût salé.

the eastern slopes burn yellow in the sunlight. Far away down in that misty purple you can see tints of gray, and these are masses of slate uncovered by grass. The descent seems too abrupt for cattle, and yet there are faint specks which may be sheep. There is no house, not even a farmhouse, near, and all traces of Moffat and its neighborhood have long been left out of sight.

But what is the solitude of this place to that of the wild and lofty region you enter when you reach the summits of the hills? Far away on every side of you stretch miles of lonely moorland, with the summits of more distant hills stretching down in endless succession into the western sky. There is no sign of life in this wild place. The stony road over which you drive was once a mail-coach road; now it is overgrown with grass. A few old stakes, rotten and tumbling, show where it was necessary at one time to place a protection against the sudden descents on the side of the road; but now the road itself seems lapsing back into moorland. It is up in this wilderness of heather and wet moss that the Tweed takes its rise, but we could hear no trickling of any stream even to break the profound and melancholy stillness: there was not even a shepherd's hut visible, and we drove on in silence, scarcely daring to break the charm of the utter loneliness of the place.

The road twists round to the right. Before us a long valley is seen, and we guess that it receives the waters of the Tweed. Almost immediately afterward we come upon a tiny rivulet some two feet in width—either the young Tweed itself or one of its various sources; and as we drive on in the gathering twilight toward the valley it seems as though we were accompanied by innumerable streamlets trickling down to the river. The fire of the sunset goes out in the west, but over there in the clear green-white of the east a range of hills still glows with a strange roseate purple. We hear the low murmuring of the Tweed in the silence of the valley. We get down among the lower-lying hills, and the neighborhood of the river seems

to have drawn to it thousands of wild creatures. There are plover calling and whirling over the marshy levels. There are black cock and gray hen dusting themselves in the road before us, and waiting until we are quite near to them before they wing their straight flight up to the heaths above. Far over us, in the clear green of the sky, a brace of wild-duck go swiftly past. A weasel glides out and over the gray stones by the roadside; and farther along the bank there are young rabbits watching and trotting, and watching again, as the phaeton gets nearer to them. And then, as the deep rose-purple of the eastern hills fades away, and all the dark green valley of the Tweed lies under the cold silver-gray of the twilight, we reach a small and solitary inn, and are almost surprised to hear once more the sound of a human voice.

CHAPTER XXXI.

OUR EPILOGUE.

Nor much it grieves

To die when summer dies on the cold sward.
 Why, I have been a butterfly, a lord
 Of flowers, garlands, love-knots, silly posies,
 Groves, meadows, melodies and arbor-roses:
 My kingdom's at its death.

WHEN you have dined on ham and eggs and whisky the evening before, to breakfast on ham and eggs and tea is a great relief the morning after. We gathered round the table in this remote little inn with much thankfulness of heart. We were to have a glorious day for the close of our journey. All round the Crook Inn there was a glare of sunshine on the rowan trees. The soft grays and greens of the hills on the other side of the river rose into a pale-blue sky where there was not a single cloud. And then, to complete the picture of the moorland hostelry, appeared a keeper who had just set free from their kennel a lot of handsome setters, and the dogs were flying hither and thither along the white road and over the grass and weeds by the tall hedges.

"Do you know," said Bell, "that this used to be a posting-house that had thir-

ty horses in its own stables, and now it is only used by a few sportsmen, who come here for the fishing, and later on for the shooting?"

So she, too, had taken to getting up in the morning and acquiring information!

"Yes," she said, "but it has been taken by a new landlord, who hopes to have gentlemen come and lodge here by the month in the autumn."

She was beginning to show a great interest in the affairs of strangers: hitherto she had cared for none of these things, except where one of our Surrey pensioners was concerned.

"And the hostler is such an intelligent and independent old man, who lets you know that he understands horses a great deal better than you."

I could see that my lady was mentally tracking out Bell's wanderings of the morning. Under whose tuition had she discovered all that about the landlord? Under whose guidance had she found herself talking to a hostler in the neighborhood of the stables? But she had not devoted the whole morning to such inquiries. We remarked that the lieutenant wore in his buttonhole a small bouquet of tiny wild-flowers, the faint colors of which were most skillfully combined and shown up by a bit of fern placed behind them. You may be sure that they were not the clumsy fingers of the young Uhlán which had achieved that work of art.

"And now, my dear children," I observe from the head of the table, "we have arrived at the last stage of our travels. We have done nothing that we ought to have done: we have done everything that we ought not to have done. As one of you has already pointed out, we have never visited a museum, or explored a ruin, or sought out a historical scene. Our very course has been inconsistent, abnormal, unreasonable: indeed, if one were to imagine a sheet of lightning getting tipsy and wandering over the country in a helpless fashion for several days, that might describe our route. We have had no adventures that could be called adventures, no experi-

ences to turn our hair gray in a dozen hours; only a general sense of light, and fresh air, and motion, and laughter. We have seen green fields and blue skies and silver lakes: we have seen bright mornings and breezy days, and spent comfortable evenings in comfortable inns. Shall we not look back upon this month in our lives, and call it the month of sunshine and green leaves?"

Here a tapping all round the table greeted the orator, and somewhat disconcerted him; but presently he proceeded: "If, at times, one member of our party, in the reckless exercise of a gift of repartee which Heaven, for some inscrutable reason, has granted her, has put a needle or two into our couch of eider-down—"

"I pronounce this meeting dissolved," says Bell quickly and with a resolute air.

"Yes, mademoiselle," put in the lieutenant, "it is dissolved. But as it breaks up—it is a solemn occasion—might we not drink one glass of champagne—"

Here a shout of laughter overwhelmed the young man. Champagne up in these wild moorlands of Peebles, where the youthful Tweed and its tributaries wander through an absolute solitude! The motion was negatived without a division, and then we went out to look after Castor and Pollux.

All that forenoon we were chased by a cloud as we drove down the valley of the Tweed. All around us there was abundant sunlight falling on the gray bed of the river, the brown water, the green banks and hills beyond, but down in the south-west was a great bank of cloud which went slowly receding into the gloom; but here we were still in the brightness of the yellow glare, with a cool breeze stirring the rowan trees and the tall weeds by the side of the river. Then, as we got farther down the valley, the bed of the stream grew broader. There were great banks of gray pebbles visible, and the brown water running in shallow channels between, where the stones fretted its surface and caused a murmur that seemed to fill the silence of the smooth hills around. Here and there a solitary fisherman was visible,

standing in the river and persistently whipping the stream with his supple fly-rod. A few cottages began to appear at considerable intervals. But we came to no village; and as for an inn, we never expected to see one. We drove leisurely along the now level road, through a country rich with waving fields of grain and dotted here and there with comfortable looking farmhouses.

Then Bell sang to us:

Upon a time I chanced
To walk along the green,
Where pretty lasses danced
In strife, to choose a queen;
Some homely dressed, some handsome,
Some pretty and some gay;
But who excelled in dancing
Must be the Queen of May.

But when she had sung the last verse—

Then all the rest in sorrow,
And she in sweet content,
Gave over till the morrow,
And homeward straight they went;
But she, of all the rest,
Was hindered by the way,
For every youth that met her
Must kiss the Queen of May—

my lady said it was very pretty, only why did Bell sing an English song after she had been trying to persuade us that she held the English and their romance in contempt?

"Now, did I ever say anything like that?" said Bell, turning in an injured way to the lieutenant.

"No," says he boldly. If she had asked him to swear that two and two were seven, he would have said that the man was a paralyzed imbecile who did not know it already.

"But I will sing you a Scotch song, if you please," says Bell, shrewdly suspecting that that was the object of Tita's protest.

"Will ye gang to the Hiellands, Leezie Lindsay?"—
this was what Bell sang now—

"Will ye gang to the Hiellands wi' me?
Will ye gang to the Hiellands, Leezie Lindsay,
My pride and my darling to be?"

"To gang to the Hiellands wi' you, sir,
I dinna ken how that may be,
For I ken nae the land that you live in,
Nor ken I the lad I'm gaun wi'."

And so-forth to the end, where the young lady "kilts up her coats o' green satin" and is off with Lord Ronald Macdonald.

Probably the lieutenant meant only to show that he knew the meaning of the word "Hiellands," but when he said, "And we do go to the Highlands—yes?" the girl was greatly taken aback. It seemed as though he were coolly placing himself and her in the position of the hero and heroine of the song; and my lady smiled, and Bell got confused, and the lieutenant, not knowing what was the matter, stared, and then turned to me to repeat the question.

By this time Bell had recovered herself, and she answered hastily, "Oh yes, we shall go to the Highlands, shall we not?—to the Trosachs, and Ben Nevis, and Inverness—"

"And Orkney too, Bell? Do you know the wild proposal you are making in laying out plans for another month's holiday?"

"And why not?" says the lieutenant. "It is only a pretence, this talk of much work. You shall send the horses and the phaeton back by the rail from Edinburgh: then you are free to go away anywhere for another month. Is it not so, madame?"

Madame is silent. She knows that she has only to say "Yes" to have the thing settled; but thoughts of home and the cares of that pauperized parish crowd in upon her mind.

"I suppose we shall get letters from the boys to-night, when we reach Edinburgh. There will be letters from home, too, saying whether everything is right down there. There may be no reason for going back at once—"

She was evidently yielding. Was it that she wanted to give those young people the chance of a summer ramble which they would remember for the rest of their life? The prospect lent a kindly look to her face; and indeed the whole of them looked so exceedingly happy, and so dangerously forgetful of the graver aspects of life, that it was thought desirable to ask them whether there might not be a message from Arthur among the batch of letters awaiting us in Edinburgh.

'Twas a random stroke, but it struck home. The conscience of these careless

people was touched. They knew in their inmost hearts that they had wholly forgotten that unhappy young man, whom they had sent back to Twickenham with all his faith in human nature destroyed for ever. But was it pity for him that now filled their faces, or a vague dread that Arthur might, in the last extremity of his madness, have gone up to Edinburgh by rail to meet us there?

"He promised us an important communication," says my lady.

She would not say that it was understood to refer to his marriage, but that was the impression he had left. Very probably, too, she was haunted by speculations as to how such a marriage, if it took place, would turn out, and whether little Katty Tatham would be able to reconcile Arthur to his lot, and convince him that he was very fortunate in not having married that faithless Bell.

"Madame," said the lieutenant suddenly—he did not care to have that pitiful fellow Arthur receive so much consideration—"this is a very sober country. Shall we never come to an inn? The champagne I spoke of, that has gone away as a dream; but on this warm day a little lemonade and a little whisky—that would do to drink the health of our last drink—yes? But there is no inn—nothing but those fields of corn and farmhouses."

At last, however, we came to a village. The lieutenant proposed to pull up and give Castor and Pollux a mouthful of water and oatmeal: it was always Castor and Pollux that were supposed to be thirsty. But what was his amazement to find that in the village there was no inn of any kind!

"I wish there were some villages of this kind down in our part of the country," says Queen Tita with a sigh. "With us, they build the public-house first, and that draws other houses."

And with that Bell began to relate to the lieutenant how my lady was once vexed beyond measure to find—just as she was coming out of an obscure public-house on a Sunday morning, after having compelled the tipsy and quarrelling landlord thereof to beg forgiveness

of his wife—a whole group of visitors at the squire's house coming along the road from church, and staring at her as if she had gone into the public for refreshment. It was a vastly interesting story, perhaps, but the sulky young man paid little heed to it. He wore an injured look. He kept looking far ahead along the road, and although it was a very pretty road, he did not seem satisfied. At length he pulled the horses up, and hailed a farmer who, in his white shirt-sleeves, was working in a field close by, along with a domestic group of fellow-laborers. "I say," called out the lieutenant, "isn't there an inn on this road?"

"Ay, that there is," said the man with a grim smile as he rose up and drew his sleeve across his forehead.

"How far yet?"

"Two miles. It's a temperance hoose!"

"A temperance hoose!" said the lieutenant to Bell: "what is a temperance hoose?"

"They don't sell any spirits there, or beer or wine."

"And is that what is called temperance?" said the lieutenant in a peevish way; and then he called out again: "Look here, my good friend: when do we come to a proper kind of inn?"

"There is an inn at Ledburn: that's eight miles on."

"Eight miles? And where was the last one we passed?"

"Well, that maun be about seven miles back!"

"Thank you! It is healthy for you, perhaps, but how you can live in a place where there is no public-house, not for fifteen miles—well, it is a wonder. Good-day to you!"

"Gude-day, sir!" said the farmer, with a broad, good-humored laugh on his face: the lieutenant was obviously not the first thirsty soul who had complained of the scarcity of inns in these parts.

"These poor horses!" growled the lieutenant as we drove on. "It is the hottest day we have had. The clouds have gone away, and we have beaten in the race. And other eight miles in this heat—"

He would probably have gone on compassionating the horses, but that he caught a glimpse of Bell demurely smiling; and then he said, "Ha, you think I speak for myself, mademoiselle. That also, when you give your horses water, you should drink yourself always for the good of the inn. But now that we can get nothing, madame, shall we imagine it what we shall drink at the Ledburn inn? Have you tried, on a hot day, this?—one glass of sparkling hock poured into a tumbler, then a bottle of seltzer-water, then a quarter glass of Angostura bitters, and a lump of ice. That is very good; and this too: you put a glass of pale sherry in the tumbler, then a bottle of soda-water, then a little lemon-juice—"

"Please, Count von Rosen, may I put it down in my note-book?" says Tita hurriedly. "You know I have your recipe for a luncheon. Wouldn't these do for it?"

"Yes, and for you!" says a third voice. "What madness has seized you, to talk of ice and hock in connection with Ledburn? If you get decent Scotch whisky and ham and eggs for luncheon, you may consider yourselves well off."

"I am a little tired of that sort of banquet," says my lady with a gentle look of resignation. "Couldn't we drive on to Edinburgh?"

But for the sake of the horses we should all have been glad to do that, for the appearance of this Ledburn inn, when we got to it, impressed us with awe and terror. It is a cuthroat-looking place. The dingy, dilapidated building stands at the parting of two roads: the doors were shut as we drove up to it—there was no one about of whom we could ask a question. It looked the sort of place for travelers to reach at dead of night, and become the subject of one or other of the sombre adventures which are associated with remote and gloomy inns in the annals of romance. When we did get hold of the landlord, his appearance was not prepossessing. He was a taciturn and surly person. There was apparently no hostler, and he helped Von Rosen to take the horses out of

the phaeton, but he did so in a fashion which awoke the ire of the lieutenant to a serious degree, and some sharp words were being bandied about when I drove the women into the inn.

"That is a dreadful person," said my lady.

"Why? He has become morose in this solitary inn, that is all. If you were shut up here for a few years, what would you become?"

We had ham and eggs and whisky in a dingy little chamber up stairs. The women would touch nothing, notwithstanding that the lieutenant came in to announce that the shoe of one of the horses had got loose, and that a smith would have to be sent for from some distance off. Moreover, when the smith did come it was found that our ingenious landlord had not informed him what was required of him, and consequently he had brought no tools. Should we send the horse back with him, or would he despatch a boy for his tools?

"How many miles is it to Edinburgh?" says my lady.

"About a dozen, I should think."

"We couldn't walk that, de you think?" she says to Bell with a doubtful air.

Bell could walk it very well, I know, but she looks at her companion for a moment, and says, "We must not try."

Looking at this fix, and at the annoyance the women experienced in being detained in this inhospitable hostelry, that young Prussian got dreadfully enraged. He was all the more wroth that there was no one on whom he could reasonably vent his anger; and in fact it was a most fortunate thing for our host that he had at last condescended to be a little more civil. The lieutenant came up into the room and proposed that we should play *bélique*. Impossible! Or would mademoiselle care to have the guitar taken out? Mademoiselle would prefer to have it remain where it was. And at length we went outside and sat in the yard or prowled along the uninteresting road until the smith arrived, and then we had the horses put in and set out upon the last stage of our journey.

We drove on in the deepening sunset. The ranges of the Pentland Hills on our left were growing darker, and the wild moorland country around was getting to be of a deeper and deeper purple. Sometimes, from the higher portions of the road, we caught a glimpse of Arthur's Seat, and in the whiter sky of the north-east it lay there like a pale-blue cloud. We passed through Pennyquick, picturesquely placed along the wooded banks of the North Esk. But we were driving leisurely enough along the level road, for the horses had done a good day's work, and there still remained a few miles before they had earned their rest.

Was it because we were driving near a great city that Von Rosen somewhat abruptly asked my lady what was the best part of London to live in? The question was an odd one for a young man. Bell pretended not to hear: she was busy with the reins. Whereupon Tita began to converse with her companion on the troubles of taking a house, and how your friends would inevitably wonder how you could have chosen such a neighborhood instead of their neighborhood, and assure you, with much compassion, that you had paid far too much for it.

"And as for Pimlico," I say to him, "you can't live there: the sight of its stucco would kill you in a month. And as for Brompton, you can't live there: it lies a hundred feet below the level of the Thames. And as for South Kensington, you can't live there: it is a huddled mass of mews. And as for Belgravia or Mayfair, you can't live there, for you could not pay the rent of a good house, and the bad houses are in slums. Paddington?—a thousand miles from a theatre. Hampstead?—good-bye to your friends. Bloomsbury?—the dullness of it will send you to an early grave. Islington?—you will acquire a Scotch accent in a fortnight. Clapham?—you will become a dissenter. Denmark Hill?—they will exclude you from all the fashionable directories. Brixton?—the 'endless meal of brick' will drive you mad. But then it is true that Pimlico is the best-drained part of London. And

Brompton has the most beautiful old gardens. And South Kensington brings you close to all sorts of artistic treasures. And Hampstead has a healthy situation. And Mayfair is close to the Park. And Clapham is close to several commons, and offers you excellent drives. And Denmark Hill is buried in trees, and you descend from it into meadows and country lanes. And Brixton has a gravelly soil. So that, you see, looking at all these considerations, you will have no difficulty whatever in deciding where you ought to live."

"I think," said the young man gravely, "the easiest way of choosing a house in London is to take one in the country."

"Oh, do live in the country!" exclaims Tita with much anxiety. "You can go so easily up to London, and take rooms about Bond street or in Half-moon street if you wish to see pictures or theatres. And what part of the country near London could you get prettier than down by Leatherhead?"

Bell is not appealed to. She will not hear. She pretends to be desperately concerned about the horses. And so the discussion is postponed, *sine die*, until the evening, and in the gathering darkness we approach Edinburgh.

How long the way seemed on this the last night of our driving! The clear twilight faded away, and the skies overhead began to show faint throbbings of the stars. A pale yellow glow on the horizon told us where the lights of Edinburgh were afire. The road grew almost indistinguishable, but overhead the great worlds became more visible in the deep vault of blue. In a perfect silence we drove along the still highway between the dark hedges, and clearer and more clear became the white constellations, trembling in the dark. What was my lady thinking of—of Arthur, or her boys at Twickenham, or of long-forgotten days at Eastbourne—as she looked up at all the wonders of the night? There lay King Charles's Wain as we had often regarded it from a boat at sea as we lay idly on the lapping waves. The jewels on Cassiopeia's chair glimmered faint and pale, and all the brilliant stars of

the Dragon's hide trembled in the dark. The one bright star of the Swan recalled many an evening in the olden times; and here, nearer at hand, Capella shone, and there Cepheus looked over to the Pole-star as from the distance of another universe. Somehow it seemed to us that under the great and throbbing vault the sea ought to be lying clear and dark; but there were other masses of blackness we saw before us, where the crags of Arthur's Seat rose sharp and black into the sky. We ran in almost under the shadow of that silent mass of hill. We drew nearer to the town, and then we saw before us long and waving lines of red fire, the gas-lamps of a mighty street. We left the majesty of the night outside, and were soon in the heart of the great city. Our journey was at an end.

But when the horses had been consigned to their stables, and all arrangements made for their transference next day to London, we sat down at the window of the Princess Street Hotel. The tables behind were inviting enough. Our evening meal had been ordered, and at length the lieutenant had the wish of his heart in procuring the wine with which to drink to the good health of our good horses that had brought us so far. But what in all the journey was there to equal the magic sight that lay before us as we turned to those big panes? Beyond a gulf of blackness the old town of Edinburgh rose with a thousand points of fire into the clear sky of a summer night. The tall houses, with their eight or nine stories, had their innumerable windows ablaze, and the points of orange light shone in the still blue shadow until they seemed to form part of some splendid and enchanted palace built on the slopes of a lofty hill. And then beyond that we could see the great crags of the Castle looming dark in the starlight, and we knew, rather than saw, that there were walls and turrets up there, cold and distant, looking down on the yellow glare of the city beneath. What was Cologne and the colored lamps of its steamers, as you see them cross the yellow waters of the Rhine when a full moon shines over the houses of Dentz, or what was Prague

with its countless spires piercing the starlight and its great bridge crossing over to the wooded heights of the Stradschin, compared to this magnificent spectacle in the noblest city of the world? The lights of the distant houses went out one by one. The streets became silent. Even the stars grew paler, but why was that? A faint light, golden and soft, began to steal along the Castle hill, and the slow, wild radiance touched the sharp slopes, the trees and the great gray walls above, which were under the stars.

"Oh, my dear," says Titia quite gently to Bell, "we have seen nothing like that, not even in your own country of the Lakes!"

[*Note by Queen Titania.*—"It seems they have put upon me the responsibility of saying *the last word*, which is not quite fair. In the old comedies it was always the *heroine* of the piece who came forward to the footlights, and in her prettiest way spoke the epilogue; and of course the heroine was always young and nice-looking. If *Bell* would only do that, I am sure you would be pleased; but she is afraid to appear in public, except at the picture exhibitions. *As for myself*, I don't know what to say. Count von Rosen suggests that I should copy some of the ancient authors and merely say 'Farewell, and clap your hands'; but very likely that is a joke—for who can tell when gentlemen *intend to be amusing?*—and perhaps they never said anything so foolish. But, as you are not to be addressed by the heroine of the piece, perhaps, considering my age—*which I am seldom allowed to forget*—perhaps a word of advice may be permitted. And that is to the ladies and gentlemen who always go abroad and spend a great deal of time and money in hiring carriages to drive them in foreign parts. Of course every one ought to go abroad, but why every year? I am sure I am not *prejudiced*, and I never enjoyed any tour abroad so much as this one through England. I do consider England (and of course you must include Scotland and Ireland) *the most beautiful country in the world.* I have never been

in America, but that does not matter. It cannot be more beautiful than England. If it is, so much the better, but I for one am quite satisfied with England; and as for the old-fashioned and quaint places you meet on a driving-tour such as this, I am sure the American ladies and gentlemen whom I have met have always admitted to me that they were *delightful*. Well, that is all. I shall say nothing about our young friends, for I think *sufficient revelations* have been made in the foregoing pages. Katty Tatham seems very pleased and happy, although

why should they have married in such a hurry? Arthur and she have visited us once since. He was very polite to Bell; so that his marriage has improved him *in one respect*. Bell was quiet and a little frightened, but when the lieutenant came down from London in the evening, they had a long talk together, and she seemed very happy. He has been looking at a 'house *in our neighborhood*,' and Bell rather likes the drawing-room. That is all. Good-bye, and thank you *very much* for having gone so far with us." T.







GUILD COURT.

A London Story.

By GEORGE MAC DONALD,

AUTHOR OF

"ANNALS OF A QUIET NEIGHBORHOOD," "ALEC FORBES OF HOWGLEN,"
ETC., ETC., ETC.

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GUILD COURT.

CHAPTER I.

THE WALK TO THE COUNTING-HOUSE.

IN the month of November, not many years ago, a young man was walking from Highbury to the City. It was one of those grand mornings that dawn only twice or thrice in the course of the year, and are so independent of times and seasons that November even comes in for its share. And it seemed as if young Thomas Worboise had at his toilet felt the influences of the weather, for he was dressed a trifle more gayly than was altogether suitable for the old age of the year. Neither however did he appear in harmony with the tone of the morning, which was something as much beyond the significance of his costume, as the great arches of a cathedral upheaving a weight of prayer from its shadowed heart toward the shadowless heavens are beyond the petty gorgeousness of the needlework that adorns the vain garments of its priesthood. It was a lofty blue sky, with multitudes of great clouds half way between it and the earth, among which as well as along the streets a glad west wind was reveling. There was nothing much for it to do in the woods now, and it took to making merry in the clouds and the streets. And so the whole heaven was full of church windows. Every now and then a great bore in the cloudy mass would shoot a sloped cylinder of sun-rays earthward, like an eye that saw in virtue of the light it shed itself upon the object of its regard. Grey billows of vapor with sunny heads tossed about in the air, an ocean for angelic sport, only that the angels could not like sport in which there was positively no danger. Where the sky shone through it looked awfully sweet, and profoundly high. But although Thomas enjoyed the wind on his right cheek as he passed the streets that opened into High Street, and although certain half sensations, half sentiments awoke in him at its touch, his look was oftenest down at his light trowsers or his enameled boots, and never rose higher than the shop-windows.

As he turned into the church-yard to go eastward, he was joined by an acquaintance a few years older than himself, whose path lay in the same direction.

"Jolly morning, aint it, Tom?" said he.

"Ye-es," answered Thomas, with something of a fashionable drawl, and in the doubtful tone of one who will be careful how he either praises or condemns any thing. "Ye-es. It almost makes one feel young again."

"Ha, ha, ha! How long is it since you enjoyed the pleasing sensation last?"

"None of your chaff, now, Charles."

"Well, upon my word, if you don't like chaff, you put yourself at the wrong end of the winnower."

"I never read the Georgics."

"Yes, I know I was born in the country—a clod-hopper, no doubt, but I can afford to stand your chaff, for I feel as young as the day I was born. If you were a fast fellow, now, I shouldn't wonder; but for one like you, that teaches in the Sunday School and all that, I am ashamed of you, talking like that. Confess now, you don't believe a word of what you cram the goslings with."

"Charles, you may make game of me as you like, but I won't let you say a word against religion in my presence. You may despise me if you like, and think it very spoony of me to teach in the Sunday School, but—well, you know well enough what I mean."

"I can guess at it, old fellow. Come, come, don't think to humbug me. You know as well as I do that you don't believe a word of it. I don't mean you want to cheat me or any one else. I believe you're above that. But you do cheat yourself. What's the good of it all when you don't feel half as merry as I do on a bright morning like this? I never trouble my head about that rubbish. Here am I as happy as I care to be—for to-day at least, and 'sufficient unto the day,' you know."

Thomas had replied, had he been capable of so replying, that although the evil is sufficient for the day, the good may not be. But he said something very different, although with a solemnity fit for an archbishop.

"There's a day coming, Charles, when the evil will be more than sufficient. I want to save my soul. You have a soul to save too."

"Possibly," answered Charles, with more carelessness than he felt; for he could not help being struck with the sententiousness of Thomas's reply, if not with the meaning contained in it. As he was not devoid of reverence, however, and had been spurred on to say what he had said more from the sense of an undefined incongruity between Thomas's habits, talk included, and the impression his general individuality made upon him, than from any wish to cry down the creed in which he took no practical interest, he went no farther in the direction in which the conversation was leading. He doubled.

"If your soul be safe, Tom, why should you be so gloomy?"

"Are there no souls to save but mine? There's yours now."

"Is that why you put on your shiny trot-boxes, and your lavender trowsers, old fellow? Come, don't be stuck up. I can't stand it."

"As you please, Charles: I love you too much to mind your making game of me."

"Come now," said Charles Wither, "speak right out as I am doing to you. You seem to know something I don't. If you would only speak right out, who knows if you mightn't convert me, and save my soul too, that you make such a fuss about. For my part, I haven't found out that I have a soul yet. What am I to do with it before I know I've got it? But that's not the point. It's the trowsers. When I feel miserable about myself—"

"Nonsense, Charles! you never do."

"But I do, though. I want something I haven't got often enough. And, for the life of me, I don't know what it is. Sometimes I think it's a wife. Sometimes I think it's freedom to do whatever I please. Sometimes I think it's a bottle of claret and a jolly good laugh. But to return to the trowsers."

"Now leave my trowsers alone. It's quite disgusting to treat serious things after such a fashion."

"I didn't know trowsers were serious things—except to old grandfather Adam. But it's not about your trowsers I was talking. It was about my own."

"I see nothing particular about yours."

"That's because I'm neither glad nor sorry."

"What do you mean?"

"Now you come to the point. That's just what I wanted to come to myself, only you wouldn't let me. You kept shying like a half-broke filly."

"Come now, Charles, you know nothing about horses, I am very sure."

Charles Wither smiled, and took no other notice of the asseveration.

"What I mean is this," he said, "that when I am in a serious, dull-grey, foggy mood, you know—not like this sky—"

But when he looked up, the sky was indeed one mass of leaden grey. The glory of the unconditioned had yielded to the bonds of November, and—*Ichabod*.

"Well," Charles resumed, looking down again, "I mean just like this same sky over St. Luke's Work-house here. Lord! I wonder if St. Luke ever knew what kind of thing he'd give his medical name to! When I feel like that, I never dream of putting on lavender trowsers, you know, Tom, my boy. So I can't understand you, you know. I only put on such like—I never had such a stunning pair as those—when I go to Richmond, or—"

"Of a Sunday, I believe," said Worboise, settled.

"Of a Sunday. Just so. The better day, the better deed, you know, as people say; though, I dare say, you don't think it."

"When the deed is good, the day makes it better. When the deed is bad, the day makes it worse," said Tom, with a mixture of reproof and "high sentence," which was just pure nonsense.

How much of Thomas's depression was real, and how much was put on—I do not mean outwardly put on without being inwardly assumed—in order that he might flatter himself with being in close sympathy and harmony with Lord

Byron, a volume of whose poems was at the time affecting the symmetry of his handsome blue frock-coat, by pulling down one tail more than the other, and bumping against his leg every step he took—I can not exactly tell. At all events, the young man was—like most men, young and old—under conflicting influences; and these influences he had not yet begun to harmonize in any definite result.

By the time they reached Bunhill Fields, they were in a grey fog; and before they got to the counting-house, it had grown very thick. Through its reddish mass the gaslights shone with the cold brilliance of pale gold.

The scene of their daily labor was not one of those grand rooms with plate-glass windows which now seem to be considered, if not absolutely necessary to commercial respectability, yet a not altogether despicable means of arriving at such. It was a rather long, rather narrow, rather low, but this morning not so dark room as usual—for the whole force of gas-burners was in active operation. In general it was dark, for it was situated in a narrow street, opening off one of the principal city thoroughfares.

As the young men entered, they were greeted with a low growl from the principal clerk, a black-browed, long-nosed man. This was the sole recognition he gave them. Two other clerks looked up with a *good-morning* and a queer expression in their eyes. Some remarks had been made about them before they entered. And now a voice came from the *penetratia*.

"Tom, I want you."

Tom was disposing of his hat and gloves with some care.

"You hear the governor, Mr. Worboise, I suppose?" said Mr. Stopper, the head-clerk, in the same growling voice, only articulated now.

"Yes, I hear him," answered Thomas, with some real and some assumed nonchalance. "I do hear him, Mr. Stopper."

Through a glass partition, which crossed the whole of the room, Mr. Boxall, "the governor," might be seen at a writing-table, with his face toward the exoteric department. All that a spectator from without could see, as he went on writing, was a high forehead, occupying more than its due share of a countenance which, foreshortened of course, from his position at the table, appeared otherwise commonplace and rather insignificant, and a head which had been as finely *toussured* by the scythe of Time as if the highest ecclesiastical dignity had depended upon the breadth and perfection of the vacancy. The corona which resulted was iron-grey.

When Thomas was quite ready, he walked into the inner room.

"Tom, my boy, you are late," said Mr. Boxall, lifting a face whose full view considerably modified the impression I have just given. There was great brilliance in the deep-set eyes, and a certain something, almost merriment, about the mouth, hovering lightly over a strong upper lip, which overhung and almost hid a disproportionately small under one. His chin was large, and between it and the forehead there was little space left for any farther development of countenance.

"Not very late, I believe, sir," answered Thomas. "My watch must have misled me."

"Pull out your watch, my boy, and let us see."

Thomas obeyed.

"By your own watch, it is a quarter past," said Mr. Boxall.

"I have been here five minutes."

"I will not do you the discredit of granting you have spent that time in taking off your hat and gloves. Your watch is five minutes slower than mine," continued Mr. Boxall, pulling out a saucapan of silver, "and mine is five minutes slower than the Exchange. You are nearly half an hour late. You will never get on if you are not punctual. It's an old-fashioned virtue, I know. But first at the office is first at the winning-post, I can tell you. You'll never make money if you're late."

"I have no particular wish--I don't want to make money," said Thomas.

"But I do," rejoined Mr. Boxall, good-naturedly; "and you are my servant, and must do your part."

Thereat Thomas bridled visibly.

"Ah! I see," resumed the merchant; "you don't like the word. I will change it. There's no masters or servants nowadays; they are all governors and employees. What they gain by the alteration, I am sure I don't know."

I spell the italicized word thus, because Mr. Boxall pronounced *employés* exactly as if it were an English word ending in *ees*.

Mr. Worboise's lip curled. He could afford to be contemptuous. He had been to Boulogne, and believed he could make a Frenchman understand him. He certainly did know two of the conjugations out of—I really don't know how many. His master did not see what the curl indicated, but possibly his look made Thomas feel that he had been rude. He sought to cover it by saying—

"Mr. Wither was as late as I was, sir. I think it's very hard I should be always pulled up, and nobody else."

"Mr. Wither is very seldom late, and you are often late, my boy. Besides, your father is a friend of mine, and I want to do my duty by him. I want you to get on."

"My father is very much obliged to you, sir."

"So he tells me," returned Mr. Boxall, with remarkable good humor. — We expect you to dine with us to-morrow, mind."

"Thank you, I have another engagement," answered Thomas, with dignity, as he thought.

Now at length Mr. Boxall's brow fell. But he looked more disappointed than angry.

"I am sorry for that, Tom. I wish you could have dined with us. I won't detain you longer. Mind you don't ink your trowsers."

Was Thomas never to hear the last of those trowsers? He began to wish he had not put them on. He made his bow, and withdrew in chagrin, considering himself disgraced before his fellows, to whom he would gladly have been a model, if he could have occupied that position without too much trouble. But his heart smote him—gently, it must be confessed—for having refused the kindness of Mr. Boxall, and shown so much resentment in a matter wherein the governor was quite right.

Mr. Boxall was a man who had made his money without losing his money's worth. Nobody could accuse him of having ever done a mean, not to say a dishonest thing. This would not have been remarkable, had he not been so

well recognized as a sharp man of business. The more knowing any jobber about the Exchange, the better he knew that it was useless to dream of getting an advantage over Mr. Boxall. But it was indeed remarkable that he should be able to steer so exactly in the middle course that, while he was keen as an eagle on his own side, he should yet be thoroughly just on the other. And, seeing both sides of a question with such marvelous clearness, in order to keep his own hands clean he was not driven from uncertainty to give the other man any thing more than his right. Yet Mr. Boxall knew how to be generous upon occasion, both in time and money: the ordinary sharp man of business is stingy of both. The chief fault he had, was a too great respect for success. He had risen himself by honest diligence, and he thought when a man could not rise it must be either from a want of diligence or of honesty. Hence he was *priori* ready to trust the successful man, and in some instances to trust him too much. That he had a family of three daughters only—one of them quite a child—who had never as yet come into collision with any project or favorite opinion of his, might probably be one negative cause of the continuance of his open-heartedness and justice of regard.

Thomas Worboise's father had been a friend of his for many years—at least so far as that relation could be called friendship which consisted in playing as much into each other's hands in the way of business as they could, dining together two or three times in the course of the year, and keeping an open door to each other's family. Thomas was an only son, with one sister. His father would gladly have brought him up to his own profession, that of the law, but Thomas showing considerable disinclination to the necessary studies, he had placed him in his friend's counting-house with the hope that that might suit him better. Without a word having been said on the subject, both the fathers would have gladly seen the son of the one engaged to any daughter of the other. They were both men of considerable property, and thought that this would be a pleasant way of determining the future of part of their possessions. At the same time Mr. Boxall was not quite satisfied with what he had as yet seen of Tom's business character. However, there had been no signs of approximation between him and either of the girls, and therefore there was no cause to be particularly anxious about the matter.

CHAPTER II.

THE INVALID MOTHER.

To account in some measure for the condition in which we find Tom at the commencement of my story, it will be better to say a word here about his mother. She was a woman of weak health and intellect, but strong character; was very religious, and had a great influence over her son, who was far more attached to her than he was to his father. The daughter, on the other hand, leaned to her father, an arrangement not uncommon in families.

On the evening of the day on which my story commences, office hours were long over before

'Tom appeared at home. He went into his mother's room, and found her, as usual, reclining on a couch, supported by pillows. She was a woman who never complained of her sufferings, and her face, perhaps in consequence of her never desiring sympathy, was hard and unnaturally still. Nor were her features merely still—they looked immobile, and her constant pain was indicated only by the absence of all curve in her upper lip. When her son entered, a gentle shimmer of love shone out of her eyes of troubled blue, but the words in which she addressed him did not correspond to this shine. She was one of those who think the Deity jealous of the amount of love bestowed upon other human beings, even by their own parents, and therefore struggle to keep down their deepest and holiest emotions, regarding them not merely as weakness but as positive sin, and likely to be most hurtful to the object on which they are permitted to expend themselves.

"Well, Thomas," said his mother, "what has kept you so late?"

"Oh! I don't know, mother," answered Tom, in whose attempted carelessness there yet appeared a touch of anxiety, which caught her eye.

"You do know, Tom; and I want to know."

"I waited and walked home with Charles Wither."

He did not say, "I waited to walk home."

"How was he so late? You must have left the office hours ago."

"He had some extra business to finish."

It was business of his own, not office business; and Tom finding out that he would be walking home a couple of hours later, had arranged to join him that he might have this account to give of himself.

"You know I do not like you to be too much with that young man. He is not religious. In fact, I believe him to be quite worldly. Does he ever go to church?"

"I don't know, mother. He's not a bad sort of fellow."

"He is a bad sort of fellow, and the less you are with him the better."

"I can't help being with him in the office, you know, mother."

"You need not be with him after office hours."

"Well, no; perhaps not. But it would look strange to avoid him."

"I thought you had more strength of character, Thomas."

"I—I spoke very seriously to him this morning, mother."

"Ah! That alters the case, if you have courage to speak the truth to him."

At that moment the door opened, and the curate of St. Solomon's was announced. Mrs. Worboise was always at home to him, and he called frequently, both because she was too great an invalid to go to church, and because they supposed, on the ground of their employing the same religious phrases in their conversation, that they understood each other. He was a gentle, abstracted youth, with a face that looked as if its informing idea had been for a considerable period sat upon by something ungenial. With him the profession had become every thing, and humanity never had been any thing, if not some-

thing bad. He walked through the crowded streets in the neighborhood with hurried step and eyes fixed on the ground, his pale face rarely brightening with recognition, for he seldom saw any passing acquaintance. When he did, he greeted him with a voice that seemed to come from far-off shores, but came really from a bloodless, nerveless chest, that had nothing to do with life, save to yield up the ghost in eternal security, and send it safe out of it. He seemed to recognize none of those human relations which make the blood mount to the face at meeting, and give strength to the grasp of the hand. He would not have hurt a fly; he would have died to save a malefactor from the gallows, that he might give him another chance of repentance. But mere human aid he had none to bestow; no warmth, no heartening, no hope.

Mr. Simon bowed solemnly, and shook hands with Mrs. Worboise.

"How are you to-night, Mrs. Worboise?" he said, glancing round the room, however. For the only sign of humanity about him was a certain weak admiration of Amy Worboise, who, if tried by his own tests, was dreadfully unworthy even of that. For she was a merry girl, who made great sport of the little church-mouse, as she called him.

Mrs. Worboise did not reply to this question, which she always treated as irrelevant. Mr. Simon then shook hands with Thomas, who looked on him with a respect inherited from his mother.

"Any signs of good in your class, Mr. Thomas?" he asked.

The question half irritated Tom. Why, he could not have explained even to himself. The fact was that he had begun to enter upon another phase of experience since he saw the curate last, and the Sunday School was just a little distasteful to him at the moment.

"No," he answered, with a certain slightest motion of the head that might have been interpreted either as of weariness or of indifference.

The clergyman interpreted it as of the latter, and proceeded to justify his question, addressing his words to the mother.

"Your son thinks me too anxious about the fruits of his labor, Mrs. Worboise. But when we think of the briefness of life, and how soon the night comes when no man can work, I do not think we can be too earnest to win souls for our crown of rejoicing when He comes with the holy angels.—First our own souls, Mr. Thomas, and then the souls of others."

Thomas, believing every word that the curate said, made notwithstanding no reply, and the curate went on.

"There are so many souls that might be saved, if one were only in earnest, and so few years to do it in. We do not strive with God in prayer, Mrs. Worboise. We faint and cease from our prayers and our endeavors together."

"That is too true," responded the lady.

"I try to do my best," said Thomas, in a tone of apology, and with a lingering doubt in his mind whether he was really speaking the absolute truth. But he comforted himself with saying to himself, "I only said 'I try to do my best.' I did not say, 'I try my best to do my best.'"

"I have no reason to doubt it, my young

friend," returned the curate, who was not ten years older than his young friend. "I only fancied—no doubt it was but the foolish fancy of my own anxiety—that you did not respond quite so heartily as usual to my remark."

The mother's eyes were anxiously fixed on her son during the conversation, for her instincts told her that he was not quite at his ease. She had never given him any scope, never trusted him, or trained him to freedom; but, herself a prisoner to her drawing-room and bedroom, sought, with all her energy and contrivance, for which she had plenty of leisure, to keep, strengthen, and repair the invisible cable by which she seemed to herself to hold, and in fact did hold, him, even when he was out of her sight, and himself least aware of the fact.

As yet again Thomas made no reply, Mr. Simon changed the subject.

"Have you much pain to-night, Mrs. Worboise?" he asked.

"I can bear it," she answered. "It will not last forever."

"You find comfort in looking to the rest that remaineth," responded Mr. Simon. "It is the truest comfort. Still, your friends would gladly see you enjoy a little more of the present—"*world*, Mr. Simon was going to say, but the word was unsuitable; so he changed it—"of the present—ah! dispensation," he said.

"The love of this world bringeth a snare," suggested Mrs. Worboise, believing that she quoted Scripture.

Thomas rose and left the room. He did not return till the curate had taken his leave. It was then almost time for his mother to retire. As soon as he entered he felt her anxious pale-blue eyes fixed upon him.

"Why did you go, Thomas?" she asked, moving on her couch, and revealing by her face a twinge of sharper pain than ordinary. "You used to listen with interest to the conversation of Mr. Simon. He is a man whose conversation is in Heaven."

"I thought you would like to have a little private talk with him, mamma. You generally do have a talk with him alone."

"Don't call it talk, Thomas. That is not the proper word to use."

"Communion, then, mother," answered Thomas, with the feeling of aversion a little stronger and more recognizable than before, but at the same time annoyed with himself that he thus felt. And, afraid that he had shown the feeling which he did recognize, he hastened to change the subject and speak of one which he had at heart.

"But, mother, dear, I wanted to speak to you about something. You mustn't mind my being late once or twice a week now, for I am going in for German. There is a very good master lives a few doors from the counting-house; and if you take lessons in the evening at his own lodgings, he charges so much less for it. And, you know, it is such an advantage nowadays for any one who wants to get on in business to know German!"

"Does Mr. Wither join you, Thomas?" asked his mother, in a tone of knowing reproof.

"No, indeed, mother," answered Thomas; and a gleam of satisfaction shot through his brain as his mother seemed satisfied. Either, however,

he managed to keep it off his face, or his mother did not perceive or understand it, for the satisfaction remained on her countenance.

"I will speak to your father about it," she answered.

This was quite as much as Thomas could have hoped for: he had no fear of his father making any objection. He kissed his mother on the cheek—it was a part of her system of mortifying the flesh with its affections and lusts that she never kissed him with any fervor, and rarely allowed those straight lips to meet his—and they parted for the night.

CHAPTER III.

EXPOSTULATION.

THOMAS descended to breakfast, feeling fresh and hopeful. The weather had changed during the night, and it was a clear frosty morning, cold blue cloudless sky and cold grey leafless earth reflecting each other's winter attributes. The sun was there, watching from afar how they could get on without him; but, as if they knew he had not forsaken them, they were both merry. Thomas stood up with his back to the blazing fire, and through the window saw his father walking bareheaded in the garden. He had not returned home till late the night before, and Thomas had gone to bed without seeing him. Still he had been up the first in the house, and had been at work for a couple of hours upon the papers he had brought home in his blue bag. Thomas walked to the window to show himself, as a hint to his father that breakfast was ready. Mr. Worboise saw him, and came in. Father and son did not shake hands or wish each other good-morning, but they nodded and smiled, and took their seats at the table. As Mr. Worboise sat down, he smoothed, first with one hand, then with the other, two long side-tresses of thin hair, trained like creepers over the top of his head, which was perfectly bald. Their arrangement added to the resemblance his forehead naturally possessed to the bottom of a flat-iron, set up on the base of its triangle. His eyebrows were very dark, straight, and bushy, his eyes a keen hazel; his nose straight on the ridge, but forming an obtuse angle at the point; his mouth curved upward, and drawn upward by the corners when he smiled, which gave him the appearance of laughing down at every thing; his chin nowise remarkable. And there, reader, I hope you have him. I ought to have mentioned that no one ever saw his teeth, though to judge from his performances at the table, they were in serviceable condition. He was considerably above the middle height, shapelier rather than stout, and wore black clothes.

"You're going to dine at the Boxalls' to-night, I believe, Tom? Mr. Boxall asked me, but I can't go. I am so busy with that case of Spender & Spoon."

"No, father. I don't mean to go," said Tom.

"Why not?" asked Mr. Worboise, with some surprise, and more than a hint of dissatisfaction. "Your mother hasn't been objecting, has she?"

"I am not aware that my mother knows of the invitation," answered Tom, trying to hide his discomfort in formality of speech.

"Well, I said nothing about it, I believe.

But I accepted for you at the same time that I declined for myself. You saw the letter—I left it for you."

"Yes, sir, I did."

"Well, in the name of Heaven, what do you mean? You answer as if you were in the witness-box. I am not going to take any advantage of you. Speak out, man. Why won't you go to Boxall's?"

"Well, sir, to tell the truth, I didn't think he behaved quite well to me yesterday. I happened to be a few minutes late, and—"

"And Boxall blew you up; and that's the way you take to show your dignified resentment! Bah!"

"He ought to behave to me like a gentleman."

"But how is he, if he isn't a gentleman? He hasn't had the bringing up you've had. But he's a good, honest fellow, and says what he means."

"That is just what I did, sir. And you have always told me that honesty is the best policy."

"Yes, I confess. But that is not exactly the kind of honesty I mean," returned Mr. Worboise, with a fishy smile, for his mouth was exactly of the fish type. "The law scarcely refers to the conduct of a gentleman as a gentleman."

This was obscure to his son, as it may be to the reader.

"Then you don't want me to behave like a gentleman?" said Tom.

"Keep your diploma in your pocket till it's asked for," answered his father. "If you are constantly obtruding it on other people, they will say you bought it and paid for it. A gentleman can afford to put an affront in beside it, when he knows it's there. But the idea of good old Boxall insulting a son of mine is too absurd, Tom. You must remember you are his servant."

"So he told me," said Tom, with reviving indignation.

"And that, I suppose, is what you call an insult, eh?"

"Well, to say the least, it is not a pleasant word to use."

"Especially as it expresses a disagreeable fact. Come, come, my boy. Better men than you will ever be have had to sweep their master's office before now. But no reference is made to the fact after they call the office their own. You go and tell Mr. Boxall that you will be happy to dine with him to-night if he will allow you to change your mind."

"But I told him I was engaged."

"Tell him the engagement is put off, and you are at his service."

"But—" began Tom, and stopped. He was going to say the engagement was not put off.

"But what?" said his father.

"I don't like to do it," answered Tom. "He will take it for giving in and wanting to make up."

"Leave it to me, then, my boy," returned his father, kindly. "I will manage it. My business is not so very pressing but that I can go if I choose. I will write and say that a change in my plans has put it in my power to be his guest, after all, and that I have persuaded you to put off your engagement and come with me."

"But that would be—would not be true," hesitated Tom.

"Pooh! pooh! I'll take the responsibility of that. Besides, it *is* true. Your mother will make

a perfect spoon of you—with the help of good little Master Simon. Can't I change my plans if I like? We must *not* offend Boxall. He is a man of mark—and warm. I say nothing about figures—I never tell secrets. I don't even say how many figures. But I know all about it, and venture to say, between father and son, that he is warm, decidedly warm—possibly hot," concluded Mr. Worboise, laughing.

"I don't exactly understand you, sir," said Tom, meditatively.

"You would understand me well enough if you had a mind to business," answered his father.

But what he really meant in his heart was that Mr. Boxall had two daughters, to one of whom it was possible that his son might take a fancy, or rather—to express it in the result, which was all that he looked to—a marriage might be brought about between Tom and Jane or Mary Boxall; in desiring which, he thought he knew what he was about, for he was Mr. Boxall's man of business.

"I won't have you offend Mr. Boxall, anyhow," he concluded. "He is your governor."

The father had tact enough to substitute the clerk's pseudonym for the obnoxious term.

"Very well, sir; I suppose I must leave it to you," answered Tom; and they finished their breakfast without returning to the subject.

When he reached the counting-house, Tom went at once to Mr. Boxall's room, and made his apologies for being late again, on the ground that his father had detained him while he wrote the letter he now handed to him. Mr. Boxall glanced at the note.

"I am very glad, Tom, that both your father and you have thought better of it. Be punctual at seven."

"Wife must put another leaf yet in the table," he said to himself, as Thomas retired to his desk. "Thirteen's not lucky though; but one is sure to be absent."

No one was absent, however, and number thirteen was the standing subject of the jokes of the evening, especially as the thirteenth was late, in the person of Mr. Wither, whom Mr. Boxall had invited out of mere good nature; for he did not care much about introducing him to his family, although his conduct in the counting-house was irreproachable. Miss Worboise had been invited with her father and brother, but whether she stayed at home to nurse her mother or to tease the curate, is of no great importance to my history.

The dinner was a good, well-contrived, rather antiquated dinner, within the compass of the house itself; for Mrs. Boxall only pleased her husband as often as she said that they were and would remain old-fashioned people, and would have their own maids to prepare and serve a dinner—"none of those men-cooks and undertakers to turn up their noses at every thing in the house!" But Tom abused the whole affair within himself as nothing but a shop-dinner; for there was Mr. Stopper, the head-clerk, looking as sour as a summons; and there was Mr. Wither, a good enough fellow and gentlemanlike, but still of the shop; besides young Weston, of whom nobody could predicate any thing in particular, save that he stood in such awe of Mr. Stopper, that he missed the way to his mouth in taking

stolen stares at him across the table. Mr. Worboise sat at the hostess's left hand, and Mr. Stopper at her right; Tom a little way from his father, with Mary Boxall, whom he had taken down, beside him; and many were the under-browed glances which the head-clerk shot across the dishes at the couple.

Mary was a very pretty, brown-haired, white-skinned, blue-eyed damsel, whose charms lay in harmony of color, general roundness, the smallness of her extremities, and her simple kind-heartedness. She was dressed in white muslin, with ribbons of precisely the color of her eyes. Tom could not help being pleased at having her beside him. She was not difficult to entertain, for she was willing to be interested in any thing; and while Tom was telling her a story about a young lad in his class at the Sunday School, whom he had gone to see at his wretched home, those sweet eyes filled with tears, and Mr. Stopper saw it, and choked in his glass of sherry. Tom saw it too, and would have been more overcome thereby, had it not been for reasons.

Charles Wither, on the opposite side of the table, was neglecting his own lady for the one at his other elbow, who was Jane Boxall—a fine, regular-featured, dark-skinned young woman. They were watched with stolen glances of some anxiety from both ends of the table, for neither father nor mother cared much about Charles Wither, although the former was too kind to omit inviting him to his house occasionally.

After the ladies retired, the talk was about politics, the money-market, and other subjects quite uninteresting to Tom, who, as I have already said, was at this period of his history a reader of Byron, and had therefore little sympathy with human pursuits except they took some abnormal form—such as piracy, atheism, or the like—in the person of one endowed with splendid faculties and gifts in general. So he stole away from the table, and joined the ladies some time before the others rose from their wine; not, however, before he had himself drunk more than his gravity of demeanor was quite sufficient to ballast. He found Mary turning over some music, and as he drew near he saw her laying aside, in its turn, Byron's song, "She walks in beauty."

"Oh! do you sing that song, Miss Mary?" he asked with *empressement*.

"I have sung it several times," she answered; "but I am afraid I can not sing it well enough to please you. Are you fond of the song?"

"I only know the words of it, and should so much like to hear you sing it. I never heard it sung. Do, Miss Mary."

"You will be indulgent, then?"

"I shall have no chance of exercising that virtue, I know. There."

He put the music on the piano as he spoke, and Mary, adjusting her white skirts and her white shoulders, began to sing the song with taste, and what was more, with simplicity. Her voice was very pleasant to the ears of Thomas, warbling one of the songs of the man whom, against his conscience, he could not help regarding as the greatest he knew. So much moved was he, that the signs of his emotion would have been plainly seen had not the rest of the company, while listening more or less to the song, been employing their eyes at the same time with

Jane's portfolio of drawings. All the time he had his eyes upon her white shoulder: stooping to turn the last leaf from behind her, he kissed it lightly. At the same moment the door opened, and Mr. Stopper entered. Mary stopped singing, and rose with a face of crimson and the timidest, slightest glance at Tom, whose face flushed up in response.

It was a foolish action, possibly repented almost as soon as done. Certainly, for the rest of the evening, Thomas sought no opportunity of again approaching Mary. I do not doubt it was with some feeling of relief that he heard his father say it was time for them to be going home.

None of the parents would have been displeased had they seen the little passage between the young people. Neither was Mary offended at what had occurred. While she sat singing, she knew that the face bending over her was one of the handsomest—a face rather long and pale, of almost pure Greek outline, with a high forehead, and dark eyes with a yet darker fringe. Nor, although the reader must see that Tom had nothing yet that could be called character, was his face therefore devoid of expression; for he had plenty of feeling, and that will sometimes shine out the more from the very absence of a *characteristic* meaning in the countenance. Hence, when Mary felt the kiss, and glanced at the face whence it had fallen, she read more in the face than there was in it to read, and the touch of his lips went deeper than her white shoulder. They were both young, and as yet mere electric jars charged with emotions. Had they both continued such as they were now, there could have been no story to tell about them; none such, at least, as I should care to tell. They belonged to the common class of mortals who, although they are weaving a history, are not aware of it, and in whom the process goes on so slowly that the eye of the artist can find in them no substance sufficient to be woven into a human creation in tale or poem. How dull that life looks to him, with its ambitions, its love-making, its dinners, its sermons, its tailor's bills, its weariness over all—without end or goal save that toward which it is driven purposeless! Not till a hope is born such that its fulfillment depends upon the will of him who cherishes it, does a man begin to develop the stuff out of which a tale can be wrought. For then he begins to have a story of his own—it may be for good, it may be for evil—but a story. Thomas's religion was no sign of this yet; for a man can no more be saved by the mere reflex of parental influences, than he will be condemned by his inheritance of parental sins. I do not say that there is no interest in the emotions of such young people; but I say there is not reality enough in them to do any thing with. They are neither consistent nor persistent enough to be wrought into form. Such are in the condition over which in the miracle-play Adam laments to Eve after their expulsion from Paradise—

"Oure hap was hard, *oure wunt was mesche (soft, tender)*
To paradys whan we were brought."

Mr. Boxall lived in an old-fashioned house in Hackney, with great rooms and a large garden. Through the latter he went with Mr. Worboise and Tom to let them out at a door in the wall, which would save them a few hundred yards in going to the North London Railway.

There were some old trees in the garden, and much shrubbery. As he returned he heard a rustle among the lilacs that crowded about a side-walk, and thought he saw the shimmer of a white dress. When he entered the drawing-room, his daughter Jane entered from the opposite door. He glanced round the room: Mr. Wither was gone. This made Mr. Boxall suspicious and restless; for, as I have said, he had not confidence in Mr. Wither. Though punctual and attentive to business, he was convinced that he was inclined to be a fast man; and he strongly suspected him of being concerned in betting transactions of different sorts, which are an abomination to the man of true business associations and habits.

Mr. Worboise left the house in comfortable spirits, for Providence had been propitious to him for some months past, and it mattered nothing to him whether or how the wind blew. But it blew from the damp west cold and grateful upon Thomas's brow. The immediate influence of the wine he had drunk had gone off, and its effects remained in discomfort and doubt. Had he got himself into a scrape with Mary Boxall? He had said nothing to her. He had not committed himself to any thing. And the wind blew cooler and more refreshing upon his forehead. And then came a glow of pleasure as he recalled her blush, and the glance she had so timidly lifted toward his lordly face. That was something to be proud of! Certainly he was one whom women—I suppose he said *girls* to himself—were ready to—yes—to fall in love with. Proud position! Envidable destiny! Before he reached home the wind had blown away every atom of remorse with the sickly fumes of the wine; and although he resolved to be careful how he behaved to Mary Boxall in future, he hugged his own handsome idea in the thought that she felt his presence, and was—just a little—not dangerously—but really a little in love with him.

CHAPTER IV. GUILD COURT.

THE office was closed, the shutters were up in the old-fashioned way on the outside, the lights extinguished, and Mr. Stopper, who was always the last to leave, was gone. The narrow street looked very dreary, for most of its windows were similarly covered. The shutters, the pavements, the kennels, every thing shone and darkened by fits. For it was a blowing night, with intermittent showers, and every thing was wet, and reflected the gas-lights in turn, which the wind teased into all angles of relation with neighboring objects, tossing them about like flowers ready at any moment to be blown from their stems. Great masses of grey went sweeping over the narrow section of the sky that could be seen from the pavement.

Now and then the moon gleamed out for one moment and no more, swallowed the next by a mile of floating rain, dusky and shapeless. Fighting now with a fierce gust, and now limping along in comparative quiet, with a cotton umbrella for a staff, an old woman passed the office, glanced up at the shuttered windows, and, after

walking a short distance, turned into a paved archway, and then going along a narrow passage, reached a small paved square, called Guild Court. Here she took from her pocket a latch-key, and opening a door much in want of paint, but otherwise in good condition, entered, and ascended a broad dusky stair-case, with great landings, whence each ascent rose at right angles to the preceding. The dim light of the tallow candle, which she had left in a corner of the stair-case as she descended, and now took up with her again, was sufficient to show that the balusters were turned and carved, and the hand-rail on the top of them broad and channeled. When she reached the first floor, she went along a passage, and at the end of it opened a door. A cheerful fire burned at the other end of a large room, and by the side of the fire sat a girl, gazing so intently into the glowing coals, that she seemed unaware of the old woman's entrance. When she spoke to her, she started and rose.

"So you're come home, Lucy, and searching the fire for a wishing-cap, as usual!" said the old lady, cheerily.

The girl did not reply, and she resumed, with a little change of tone—

"I do declare, child, I'll never let him cross the door again, if it drives you into the dumps that way. Take heart of grace, my girl; you're good enough for him any day, though he be a fine gentleman. He's no better gentleman than my son, anyhow, though he's more of a buck."

Lucy moved about a little uneasily; turned to the high mantel-piece, took up some trifle and played with it nervously, set it down with a light sigh, the lightness of which was probably affected; went across the room to a chest of drawers, in doing which she turned her back on the old woman; and then only replied, in a low pleasant voice, which wavered a little, as if a good cry were not far off—

"I'm sure, grannie, you're always kind to him when he comes."

"I'm civil to him, child. Who could help it? Such a fine handsome fellow! And has got very winning ways with him, too! That's the mischief of it! I always had a soft heart to a frank face. A body would think I wasn't a bit wiser than the day I was born."

And she laughed a toothless old laugh which must once have been very pleasant to her husband to hear, and indeed was pleasant to hear now. By this time she had got her black bonnet off, revealing a widow's cap, with grey hair neatly arranged down the sides of a very wrinkled old face. Indeed the wrinkles were innumerable, so that her cheeks and forehead looked as if they had been crimped with a penknife, like a piece of fine cambrie frill. But there was not one deep rut in her forehead or cheek. Care seemed to have had nothing at all to do with this condition of them.

"Well, grannie, why should you be so cross with me for liking him, when you like him just as much yourself?" said Lucy, archly.

"Cross with you, child! I'm not cross with you, and you know that quite well. You know I never could be cross with you even if I ought to be. And I didn't ought now, I'm sure. But I *am* cross with him; for he can't be behaving right to you when your sweet face looks like that."

"Now don't, grannie, else I shall have to be

cross with you. Don't say a word against him. Don't now, dear grannie, or you and I shall quarrel, and that would break my heart."

"Bless the child! I'm not saying a word for or against him. I'm afraid you're a great deal too fond of him, Lucy. What hold have you of him now?"

"What hold, grannie!" exclaimed Lucy indignantly. "Do you think if I were going to be married to him to-morrow, and he never came to the church—do you think I would lift that bonnet to hold him to it? Indeed, then, I wouldn't."

And Lucy did not cry, but she turned her back on her grandmother as if she would rather her face should not be seen.

"What makes you out of sorts, to night, then, Lucy?"

Lucy made no reply, but moved hastily to the window, made the smallest possible chink between the blind and the window-frame, and peeped out into the court. She had heard a footstep which she knew; and now she glided, quiet and swift as a ghost, out of the room, closing the door behind her.

"I wonder when it will come to an end. Always the same thing over again, I suppose, to the last of the world. It's no use telling them what we know. It won't make one of them young things the wiser. The first man that looks at them turns the head of them. And I must confess, if I was young again myself, and hearkening for my John's foot in the court, I might hobble—no, not hobble then, but run down the stairs like Lucy there, to open the door for him. But then John was a good one; and there's few o' them like him now, I doubt."

Something like this, I venture to imagine, was passing through the old woman's mind when the room door opened again, and Lucy entered with Thomas Worboise. Her face was shining like a summer now, and a conscious pride sat on the forehead of the young man, which made him look far nobler than he has yet shown himself to my reader. The last of a sentence came into the room with him.

"So you see, Lucy, I could not help it. My father—How do you do, Mrs. Boxall? What a blowing night it is! But you have a kind of swallow's nest here, for hardly a breath gets into the court when our windows down below in the counting-house are shaking themselves to bits."

It was hardly a room to compare to a swallow's nest. It was a very large room indeed. The floor, which was dark with age, was uncarpeted, save just before the fire, which blazed brilliantly in a small kitchen-range, curiously contrasting with the tall, carved chimney-piece above it. The ceiling corresponded in style, for it was covered with ornaments—

All made out of the carver's brain.

And the room was strangely furnished. The high oak settle of a farm-house stood back against the wall not far from the fire, and a few feet from it a tall, old-fashioned piano, which bore the name of Broadwood under the cover. At the side of the room farthest from the fire, stood one of those chests of drawers, on which the sloping lid at the top left just room for a glass-doored book-case to stand, rivaling the piano in height. Then there was a sofa, covered with chintz plentifully besprinkled with rose-buds; and in

the middle of the room a square mahogany table, called by upholsterers a *pembroke*, I think, the color of which was all but black with age and manipulation, only it could not be seen now because it was covered with a check of red and blue. A few mahogany chairs, seated with horse hair, a fire-screen in faded red silk, a wooden footstool and a tall backed easy-chair, covered with striped stuff, almost completed the furniture of the nondescript apartment.

Thomas Worboise carried a chair to the fire, and put his feet on the broad-barred bright kitchen fender in front of it.

"Are your feet wet, Thomas?" asked Lucy with some gentle anxiety, and a tremor upon his name, as if she had not yet got quite used to saying it without a *Mr.* before it.

"Oh no, thank you. I don't mind a little wet. Hark how the wind blows in the old chimney up there! It'll be an awkward night on the west coast, this. I wonder what it feels like to be driving right on the rocks at the Land's End, or some such place."

"Don't talk of such things in that cool way, Mr. Thomas. You make my blood run cold," said Mrs. Boxall.

"He doesn't mean it, you know, grannie," said Lucy, meditating.

"But I do mean it. I should like to know how it feels," persisted Thomas—"with the very shrouds, as taut as steel bars, blowing out in the hiss of the nor'wester."

"Yes, I dare say!" returned the old lady, with some indignation. "You would like to know how it felt so long as your muddy boots was on my clean fender!"

Thomas did not know that the old lady had lost one son at sea, and had another the captain of a sailing-vessel, or he would not have spoken as he did. But he was always wanting to know how things felt. Had not his education rendered it impossible for him to see into the state of his own mind, he might, questioned as to what he considered the ideal of life, have replied, "A continuous succession of delicate and poetic sensations." Hence he had made many a frantic effort after religious sensations. But the necessity of these was now somewhat superseded by his growing attachment to Lucy, and the sensations consequent upon that.

Up to this moment, in his carriage and speech, he had been remarkably different from himself, as already shown in my history. For he was, or thought himself, somebody here; and there was a freedom and ease about his manner, amounting, in fact, to a slight though not disagreeable swagger, which presented him to far more advantage than he had in the presence of his father and mother, or even of Mr. Boxall and Mr. Stopper. But he never could bear any one to be displeased with him except he were angry himself. So when Mrs. Boxall spoke as she did, his countenance fell. He instantly removed his feet from the fender, glanced up at her face, saw that she was really indignant, and, missing the real reason of course, supposed that it was because he had been indiscreet in being disrespectful to a cherished article of housewifery. It was quite characteristic of Tom that he instantly pulled his handkerchief from his pocket, and began therewith to restore the brightness of the desecrated iron. This went at once to the old

lady's heart. She snatched the handkerchief out of his hand.

"Come, come, Mr. Thomas. Don't ye mind an old woman like that. To think of using your handkerchief that way! And cambric too!"

Thomas looked up in surprise, and straightway recovered his behavior.

"I didn't think of your fender," he said.

"Oh, drat the fender!" exclaimed Mrs. Boxall, with more energy than refinement.

And so the matter dropped, and all sat silent for a few moments, Mrs. Boxall with her knitting, and Tom and Lucy beside each other with their thoughts. Lucy presently returned to their talk on the stair-case.

"So you were out at dinner on Wednesday, Thomas?"

"Yes. It was a great bore, but I had to go.—Boxall's, you know. I beg your pardon, Mrs. Boxall; but that's how fellows like me talk, you know. I should have said Mr. Boxall. And I didn't mean that he was a bore. That he is not, though he is a little particular—of course. I only meant it was a bore to go there when I wanted to come here."

"Is my cousin Mary *very* pretty?" asked Lucy, with a meaning in her tone which Thomas easily enough understood.

He could not help blushing, for he remembered, as well he might. And she could not help seeing, for she had eyes, very large ones, and at least as loving as they were large.

"Yes, she is very pretty," answered Thomas; "but not nearly so pretty as you, Lucy."

Thomas, then, was not stupid, although my reader will see that he was weak enough. And Lucy was more than half satisfied, though she did not half like that blush. But Thomas himself did not like either the blush or its cause. And poor Lucy knew nothing of either, only meditated upon another blush, quite like this as far as appearance went, but with a different heart to it.

Thomas did not stop more than half an hour. When he left, instead of walking straight out of Guild Court by the narrow paved passage, he crossed to the opposite side of the court, opened the door of a more ancient-looking house, and entered. Reappearing—that is, to the watchful eyes of Lucy manœuvring with the window-blind—after about two minutes, he walked home to Highbury, and told his mother that he had come straight from his German master, who gave him hopes of being able, before many months should have passed, to write a business letter in intelligible German.

CHAPTER V.

MORE ABOUT GUILD COURT.

MRS. BOXALL was the mother of Richard Boxall, the "governor" of Thomas Worboise. Her John had been the possessor of a small landed property, which he farmed himself, and upon which they brought up a family of three sons and one daughter, of whom Richard was the eldest, and the daughter, Lucy, the youngest. None of the sons showed the least inclination to follow the plough or take any relation more or less dignified toward the cultivation of the ancestral acres. This

aversion when manifested by Richard occasioned his father considerable annoyance, but he did not oppose his desire to go into business instead of farming; for he had found out by this time that he had perpetuated in his sons a certain family *hoggedness* which he had inherited from one ancestor at least—an obstinacy which had never yet been overcome by any argument, however good. He yielded to the inevitable, and placed him in a merchant's office in London, where Richard soon made himself of importance. When his second son showed the same dislike to draw his livelihood directly from the bosom of the earth, and revealed a distinct preference for the rival element, with which he had made some acquaintance when at school at a sea-port at no great distance from his home, old John Boxall was still more troubled, but gave his consent—a consent which was, however, merely a gloomy negation of resistance. The cheerfulness of his wife was a great support to him under what he felt as a slight to himself and the whole race of Boxalls; but, he began, notwithstanding, to look upon his beloved fields with a jaundiced eye, and the older he grew the more they reminded him of the degenerate tastes and heartlessness of his boys. When he discovered, a few years after, that his daughter had pledged herself, still in his eyes a mere child, to a music-master who visited her professionally from the next town, he flew at last into a terrible rage, which was not appeased by the girl's elopement and marriage. He never saw her again. Her mother, however, was not long in opening a communication with her, and it was to her that Edward, the youngest son, fled upon occasion of a quarrel with his father, whose temper had now become violent as well as morose. He followed his second brother's example, and went to sea. Still the mother's cheerfulness was little abated; for, as she said to herself, she had no reason to be ashamed of her children. None of them had done any thing they had to be ashamed of, and why should she be vexed? She had no idea Lucy had so much spirit in her. And if it were not for the old man, who was surely over-fond of those fields of his, she could hold up her head with the best of them; for there was Dick—such a gentleman to be sure! and John, third mate already! and Cecil Burton sought after in London, to give his lessons as if he were one of the old masters! The only thing was that the wind blew harder at night since Ned went to sea; and a boy was in more danger than a grown man and a third mate like John.

And so it proved; for one night when the wind blew a new hay-rick of his father's across three parishes, it blew Edward's body ashore on the west coast.

Soon after this, a neighboring earl, who had the year before paid off a mortgage on his lands, proceeded in natural process to enlarge his borders; and while there was plenty that had formerly belonged to the family to repurchase, somehow or another took it into his head to begin with what might seem more difficult of attainment. But John Boxall was willing enough to part with his small patrimony—for he was sick of it—provided he had a good sum of ready money, and the house with its garden and a paddock, by way of luck-penny, secured to him for his own life and that of his wife. This was ea-

sily arranged. But the late yeoman moped more than ever, and died within a twelvemonth, leaving his money to his wife. As soon as he was laid in his natural inheritance of land cubical, his wife went up to London to her son Richard, who was by this time the chief manager of the business of Messrs. Blunt & Baker. To him she handed over her money to use for the advantage of both. Paying her a handsome percentage, he invested it in a partnership in the firm, and with this fresh excitement to his energies, soon became, influentially, the principal man in the company. The two other partners were both old men, and neither had a son or near relative whom he might have trained to fill his place. So in the course of a few years, they, speaking commercially, fell asleep, and in the course of a few more, departed this life, commercially and otherwise. It was somewhat strange, however, that all this time Richard Boxall had given his mother no written acknowledgment of the money she had lent him, and which had been the foundation of his fortune. A man's faults are sometimes the simple reverses of his virtues, and not the results of his vices.

When his mother came first to London, he had of course taken her home to his house and introduced her to his wife, who was a kind and even warm-hearted woman. But partly from prudence, partly from habit, Mrs. Boxall, senior, would not consent to become the permanent guest of Mrs. Boxall, junior, and insisted on taking a lodging in the neighborhood. It was not long, however, before she left the first, and betook herself to a second, nor long again before she left the second, and betook herself to a third. For her nature was like a fresh bracing wind, which, when admitted within the precincts of a hot-house, where every thing save the fire is neglected, proves a most unwelcome presence, yea, a dire dismay. Indeed, admirably as she had managed and borne with her own family, Mrs. Boxall was quite unfit to come into such habitual contact with another household as followed from her occupying a part of the same dwelling. Her faith in what she had tried with success herself, and her repugnance to whatever she had not been accustomed to, were such that her troublesomeness when she became familiar, was equal to the good nature which at first so strongly recommended her. Hence her changes of residence were frequent.

Up to the time when he became a sleeping partner, Mr. Blunt had resided in Guild Court—that is, the house door was in the court, while the lower part of the house, forming the offices of the firm, was entered from what was properly a lane, though it was called Bagot Street. As soon as mother and son heard that Mr. Blunt had at length bought a house in the country, the same thought arose in the mind of each—might not Mrs. Boxall go and live there? The house belonged to the firm, and they could not well let it, for there was more than one available connection between the two portions of the building, although only one had lately been in use, a door, namely, by which Mr. Blunt used to pass immediately from the glass-partitioned part of the counting-house to the foot of the oak staircase already described; while they used two of the rooms in the house as places of deposit for old books and papers, for which there was no pos-

sible accommodation in the part devoted to active business. Hence nothing better could be devised than that Mrs. Boxall, senior, should take up her abode in the habitable region. This she made haste to do, accompanied by a young servant. With her she soon quarreled, however, and thereafter relied upon the ministrations of a charwoman. The door between the house and the counting-house was now locked, and the key of it so seldom taken from the drawer of Mr. Boxall, that it came to be regarded almost as a portion of the wall. So much for the inner connection of Guild Court and Bagot Street.

Some years after Mrs. Boxall removed to London, Mr. Burton, the music-master, died. They had lived from hand to mouth, as so many families of uncertain income are compelled to do, and his unexpected death left his wife and child without the means of procuring immediate necessities. Inheriting the narrowness and prejudices of his descent and of his social position to a considerable degree, Mr. Boxall had never come to regard his sister's match with a music-master as other than a degradation to the family, and had, in his best humors, never got farther in the humanities of the kingdom of heaven, than to patronize his brother-in-law; though if size and quality go for any thing in existence itself, as they do in all its accidents, Richard Boxall was scarcely comparable, honest and just man as he was, to Cecil Burton; who, however, except that he was the father of Lucy, and so in some measure accounts for her, is below the western horizon of our story, and therefore need scarcely be alluded to again. This behavior of her brother was more galling to Mrs. Burton than to her husband, who smiled down any allusion to it; and when she was compelled to accept Richard's kindness in the shape of money, upon the death of Mr. Burton, it was with a bitterness of feeling which showed itself plainly enough to wound the self-love of the conscientiously benevolent man of business. But from the first there had been the friendliest relations between the mother and daughter, and it was only from her determination to avoid all ground of misunderstanding, that Mrs. Boxall had not consented to take up her abode with the Burtons. Consequently after the death of Mr. Burton, the mother drew yet closer to the daughter, while the breach between brother and sister was widened.

Two years after the death of her husband, Mrs. Burton followed him. Then Mrs. Boxall took her grandchild Lucy home to Guild Court, and between the two there never arose the question of which should be the greater. It often happens that even a severe mother becomes an indulgent grandmother, partly from the softening and mellowing influences of time, partly from increase of confidence in child-nature generally, and perhaps also in part from a diminished sense of responsibility in regard to a child not immediately her own. Hence grandparents who have brought up their own children well are in danger of spoiling severely those of their sons and daughters. And such might have been the case with Mrs. Boxall and Lucy, had Lucy been of a more spoilable nature. But she had no idea of how much she had her own way, nor would it have made any difference to her if she had known it. There was a certain wonderful

delicacy of moral touch about her in the discrimination of what was becoming, as well as of what was right, which resulted in a freedom the legalist of society would have called boldness, and a restraint which the same judge would have designated particularity; for Lucy's ways were not, and could not, be her ways, the one fearing and obeying, as she best could, existing laws hard to interpret, the other being a law unto herself. The harmonies of the music by which, from her earliest childhood, her growing brain had been interpenetrated, had, by her sweet will, been transformed into harmonies of thought, feeling, and action. She was not clever, but then she did not think she was clever, and therefore it was of no consequence; for she was not dependent upon her intellect for those judgments which alone are of importance in the reality of things, and in which clever people are just as likely to go wrong as any other body. She had a great gift in music—a gift which Thomas Worboise had never yet discovered, and which, at this period of his history, he was incapable of discovering, for he had not got beyond the toffee of drawing-room sentiment—the song which must be sent forth to the universe from the pedestal of ivory shoulders. But two lines of a ballad from Lucy Burton were worth all the music, "She walks in beauty" included, that Mary Boxall could sing or play.

Lucy had not seen her consins for years. Her uncle Richard, though incapable of being other than satisfied that the orphan should be an inmate of the house in Guild Court, could not, or, at least, did not forget the mildly defiant look with which she retreated from his outstretched hand, and took her place beside her mother, on the sole occasion on which he called upon his sister after her husband's death. She had heard remarks—and being her mother's, she could not question the justice of them. Hence she had not once, since she had taken up her abode with her grandmother, been invited to visit her consins; and there was no affection, but in truth, a little anxiety, in the question she asked Thomas Worboise about Mary Boxall's beauty. But, indeed, had she given her uncle no such offense, I have every reason to believe that her society would not have been much courted by his family. When the good among rich relations can be loving without condescension, and the good among poor relations can make sufficient allowance for the rich, then the kingdom of heaven will be nigh at hand. Mr. Boxall shook hands with his niece when he met her, asked her after his mother, and passed on.

But Lucy was not dependent on her uncle, scarcely on her grandmother, even. Before her mother's death, almost child as she still was, she had begun to give lessons in music to a younger child than herself, the daughter of one of her father's favorite pupils, who had married a rich merchant; and these lessons she continued. She was a favorite with the family, who were Jews, living in one of the older quarters of the west end of London; and they paid her handsomely, her age and experience taken into account. Every morning, except Saturday, she went by the underground railway to give an hour's lesson to Miriam Morgenstern, a gorgeous little eastern, whom her parents had no right to dress in such foggly colors as she wore.

Now a long farewell to preliminaries.

Lucy was just leaving her home one morning to go to her pupil, and had turned into the flagged passage which led from the archway into the court, when she met a little girl of her acquaintance, whom, with her help, I shall now present to my readers. She was a child of eight, but very small for her age. Her hair was neatly parted and brushed on each side of a large smooth forehead, projecting over quiet eyes of blue, made yet quieter by the shadow of those brows. The rest of her face was very diminutive. A soberness as of complete womanhood, tried and chastened, lay upon her. She looked as if she had pondered upon life and its goal, and had made up her little mind to meet its troubles with patience. She was dressed in a cotton frock printed with blue rose-buds, faded by many waters and much soap. When she spoke, she used only one side of her mouth for the purpose, and then the old-fashionedness of her look rose almost to the antique, so that you could have fancied her one of the time-belated *good people* that, leaving the green forest-rings, had wandered into the city and become a Christian at a hundred years of age.

"Well, Mattie," said Lucy, "how are you this morning?"

"I am quite well, I thank you, miss," answered Mattie. "I don't call this morning. The church clock struck eleven five minutes ago."

This was uttered with a smile from the half of her mouth which seemed to say, "I know you want to have a little fun with me by using wrong names for things because I am a little girl, and little girls can be taken in; but it is of no use with me, though I can enjoy the joke of it."

Lucy smiled too, but not much, for she knew the child.

"What do you call the morning, then, Mattie?" she asked.

"Well,"—she almost always began her sentences with a *Well*—"I call it morning before the sun is up."

"But how do you know when the sun is up? London is so foggy, you know, Mattie."

"Is it? I didn't know. Are there places without fog, miss?"

"Oh yes; many."

"Well, about the sun. I always know what he's about, miss. I've got a almanac."

"But you don't understand the almanac, do you?"

"Well, I don't mean to say I understand all about it, but I always know what time the sun rises and goes to bed, you know."

Lucy had found she was rather early for the train, and from where she stood she could see the clock of St. Jacob's, which happened to be a reliable one. Therefore she went an to amuse herself with the child.

"But how is it that we don't see him, if he gets up when the almanac says, Mattie?"

"Well, you see, miss, he sleeps in a crib. And the sides of it are houses and churches, and St. Pauls, and the likes of that."

"Yes, yes; but some days we see him, and others we don't. We don't see him to-day, now."

"Well, miss, I dare say he's cross some mornings, and keeps the blankets about him after he's got his head up."

Lucy could not help thinking of Milton's line

—for of the few poems she knew, one was the “Ode on the Nativity”—

So, when the Sun in bed,
Curtain'd with cloudy red,
Pillows his chin upon an orient wave.

But the child laughed so queerly, that it was impossible to tell whether or how much those were her real ideas about the sunrise.

“How is your father?” Lucy asked.

“Do you mean my father or my mother?”

“I mean your father, of course, when I say so.”

“Yes, but I have a mother, too.”

Lucy let her have her way, for she did not quite understand her. Only she knew that the child's mother had died two or three years ago.

“Well,” resumed the child, “my father is quite well, thank God; and so is my mother. There he is, looking down at us.”

“Who do you mean, Mattie?” asked Lucy, now bewildered.

“Well, my mother,” answered the child, with a still odder half smile.

Lucy looked up, and saw—but a little description is necessary. They were standing, as I have said already, in the flagged passage which led to, and post-officially considered, formed part of Guild Court. The archway from Bagot Street into this passage was as it were tunneled through a house facing the street, and from this house a wall, stretching inward to the first house in the court proper, formed one side of the passage. About the middle, this wall broke into two workshops, the smallest and strangest ever seen out of the east. There was no roof visible—that lay behind the curtain-wall; but from top to bottom of the wall, a height of about nine feet, there was glass, divided in the middle so as to form two windows, one above the other. So likewise on the right hand side of the glass were two doors, or hatches, one above the other. The tenement looked as if the smallest of rooms had been divided into two horizontally by a floor in the middle, thus forming two cells, which could not have been more than five feet by four, and four feet in height. In the lower, however, a little height had been gained by sinking the floor, to which a single step led down. In this under cell a cobbler sat, hammering away at his lapstone—a little man, else he could hardly have sat there, or even got in without discomfort. Every now and then he glanced up at the girl and the child, but never omitted a blow in consequence. Over his head, on the thin floor between, sat a still smaller man, cross-legged like a Turk, busily “plying his needle and thread.” His hair, which standing straight up gave a look of terror to his thin pale countenance, almost touched the roof. It was the only luxuriance about him. As plants run to seed, he seemed to have run to hair. A calm keen eye underneath its towering forest, revealed observation and peacefulness. He, too, occasionally looked from his work, but only in the act of drawing the horizontal thread, when his eyes had momentary furlough, moving in alternate oscillation with his hand. At the moment when the child said so, he was looking down in a pause in which he seemed for the moment to have forgotten his work in his interest in the pair below. He might be forty, or fifty or sixty—no one could tell which.

Lucy looked up, and said, “That is Mr. Spelt; that is not your mother.”

“Well, but I call him my mother. I can't have two fathers, you know. So I call Mr. Spelt my mother; and so he is.”

Here she looked up and smiled knowingly to the little tailor, who, leaning forward to the window, through which, reaching from roof to floor of his cage, his whole form was visible, nodded friendly to the little girl in acknowledgment of her greeting. But it was now time for Lucy to go.

As soon as she had disappeared beyond the archway, Mattie turned toward the workshops. Mr. Spelt saw her coming, and before she had reached them, the upper half of the door was open, and he was stretching down his arms to lift her across the shoemaking region, into his own more celestial realm of tailoring. In a moment she was sitting in the furthest and snug-gest corner, not cross-legged, but with her feet invisible in a heap of cuttings, from which she was choosing what she would—always with a reference to Mr. Spelt—for the dressing of a boy-doll which he had given her.

This was a very usual proceeding—so much so that Mattie and the tailor sat for nearly an hour without a word passing between them beyond what sprung from the constructive exigencies of the child. Neither of them was given to much utterance, though each had something of the peculiar gift of the Ancient Mariner, namely, “strange power of speech.” They would sit together sometimes for half a day without saying a word; and then again there would be an oasis of the strangest conversation in the desert of their silence—a bad simile, for their silence must have been a thoughtful one to blossom into such speech. But the first words Mattie uttered on this occasion, were of a somewhat mundane character. She heard a footstep pass below. She was too far back in the cell to see who it was, and she did not lift her eyes from her work.

“When the cat's away, the mice will play,” she said.

“What are you thinking about, Mattie?” asked the tailor.

“Well, wasn't that Mr. Worboise that passed? Mr. Boxall must be out. But he needn't go there, for somebody's always out this time o' day.”

“What do you mean, Mattie?” again asked the tailor.

“Well, perhaps you don't understand such things, Mr. Spelt, not being a married man.”

Poor Mr. Spelt had had a wife who had killed herself by drinking all his earnings; but perhaps Mattie knew nothing about that.

“No more I am. You must explain it to me.”

“Well, you see, young people will be young people.”

“Who told you that?”

“Old Mrs. Boxall says so. And that's why Mr. Worboise goes to see Miss Burton. I know. I told you so,” she added, as she heard his step returning. But Thomas bore a huge ledger under his arm, for which Mr. Stopper had sent him round to the court. Very likely, however, had Lucy been at home, he might have laid a few minutes more to the account of the errand.

“So, so!” said the tailor. “That's it, is it, Mattie?”

“Yes; but we don't say any thing about such things, you know.”

"Oh, of course not," answered Mr. Spelt; and the conversation ceased.

After a long pause, the child spoke again.

"Is God good to you to-day, mother?"

"Yes, Mattie. God is always good to us."

"But he's better some days than others, isn't he?"

To this question the tailor did not know what to reply, and therefore, like a wise man, did not make the attempt. He asked her instead, as he had often occasion to do with Mattie, what she meant.

"Don't you know what I mean, mother? Don't you know God's better to us some days than others? Yes; and he's better to some people than he is to others."

"I am sure he's always good to you and me, Mattie."

"Well, yes; generally."

"Why don't you say *always*?"

"Because I'm not sure about it. Now to-day it's all very well. But yesterday the sun shone in the window a whole hour."

"And I drew down the blind to shut it out," said Mr. Spelt, thoughtfully.

"Well," Mattie went on, without heeding her friend's remark, "he *could* make the sun shine every day, if he liked.—I *suppose* he could," she added, doubtfully.

"I don't think we should like it, if he did," returned Mr. Spelt, "for the drain down below smells bad in the hot weather."

"But the rain might come—at night, I mean, not in the day-time—and wash them all out. Mightn't it, mother?"

"Yes; but the heat makes people ill. And if you had such hot weather as they have in some parts, as I am told, you would be glad enough of a day like this."

"Well, why haven't they a day like this, when they want it?"

"God knows," said Mr. Spelt, whose magazine was nearly exhausted, and the enemy pressing on vigorously.

"Well, that's what I say. God knows, and why doesn't he help it?"

And Mr. Spelt surrendered, if silence was surrender. Mattie did not press her advantage, however, and the besieged plucked up heart a little.

"I fancy perhaps, Mattie, he leaves something for us to do. You know they cut out the slop-work at the shop, and I can't do much more with that but put the pieces together. But when a repairing job comes in, I can contrive a bit then, and I like that better."

Mr. Spelt's meaning was not very clear, either to himself or to Mattie. But it involved the shadow of a great truth—that all the discords we hear in the universe around us, are God's trumpets sounding a *réveillé* to the sleeping human will, which once working harmoniously with his, will soon bring all things into a pure and healthy rectitude of operation. Till a man has learned to be happy without the sunshine, and therein becomes capable of enjoying it perfectly, it is well that the shine and the shadow should be mingled, so as God only knows how to mingle them. To effect the blessedness for which God made him, man must become a fellow-worker with God.

After a little while Mattie resumed operations.

"But you can't say, mother, that God isn't

better to some people than to other people. He's surely gooder to you and me than he is to Poppie."

"Who's Poppie?" asked Mr. Spelt, sending out a flag of negotiation.

"Well, there she is—down in the gutter, I suppose, as usual," answered Mattie, without lifting her eyes.

The tailor peeped out of his house-front, and saw a barefooted child in the court below. What she was like I shall take a better opportunity of informing my reader. For at this moment the sound of strong nails tapping sharply reached the ear of Mr. Spelt and his friend. The sound came from a window just over the archway, hence at right angles to Mr. Spelt's workshop. It was very dingy with dust and smoke, allowing only the outline of a man's figure to be seen from the court. This much Poppie saw, and taking the tapping to be intended for her, fled from the court on soundless feet. But Mattie rose at once from her corner, and, laying aside cuttings and doll, stuck her needle and thread carefully in the bosom of her frock, saying—

"That's my father a-wanting of me. I wonder what he wants now. I'm sure I don't know how he would get on without *me*. And that *is* a comfort. Poor man! he misses my mother more than I do, I believe. He's always after me. Well, I'll see you again in the afternoon, if I can. And, if not, you may expect me about the same hour to-morrow."

While she thus spoke she was let down from the not very airy height of the workshop on to the firm pavement below; the tailor stretching his arms with her from above, like a bird of prey with a lamb in his talons. The last words she spoke from the ground, her head thrown back between her shoulders that she might look the tailor in the face, who was stooping over her like an angel from a cloud in the family Bible.

"Very well, Mattie," returned Mr. Spelt; "you know your own corner well enough by this time, I should think."

So saying, he drew himself carefully into his shell, for the place was hardly more, except that he could just work without having to get outside of it first. A soft half smile glimmered on his face; for although he was so used to Mattie's old-fashioned ways, that they scarcely appeared strange to him now, the questions that she raised were food for the little tailor's meditation—all day long, upon occasion. For some tailors are given to thinking, and when they are they have good opportunity of indulging their inclinations. And it is wonderful what a tailor's thinking may come to, especially if he reads his New Testament. Now, strange perhaps to tell, though Mr. Spelt never went to church, he did read his New Testament. And the little tailor was a living soul. He was one of those few who seem to be born with a certain law of order in themselves, a certain tidiness of mind, as it were, which would gladly see all the rooms or regions of thought swept and arranged; and not only makes them orderly, but prompts them to search after the order of the universe. They would gladly believe in the harmony of things; and although the questions they feel the necessity of answering take the crudest forms and the most limited and individual application, they yet are sure to have

something to do with the laws that govern the world. Hence it was that the partial misfit of a pair of moleskin or fustian trowsers—for seldom did his originality find nobler material to exercise itself upon—would make him quite miserable, even though the navy or dock-laborer might be perfectly satisfied with the result, and ready to pay the money for them willingly. But it was seldom, too, that he had even such a chance of indulging in the creative element of the tailor's calling, though he might have done something of the sort, if he would, in the way of altering. Of that branch of the trade, however, he was shy, knowing that it was most frequently in request with garment unrighteously come by; and Mr. Spelt's thin hands were clean.

He had not sat long after Mattie left him, before she reappeared from under the archway.

"No, no, mother," she said, "I ain't going to perch this time. But father sends his compliments, and will you come and take a dish of tea with him and me this afternoon?"

"Yes, Mattie; if you will come and fetch me when the tea's ready."

"Well, you had better not depend on me; for I shall have a herring to cook, and a muffin to toast, besides the tea to make and set on the hob, and the best china to get out of the black cupboard, and no end o' things to see to."

"But you needn't get out the best china for me, you know."

"Well, I like to do what's proper. And you just keep your eye on St. Jacob's, Mr. Spelt, and at five o'clock, when it has struck two of them, you get down and come in, and you'll find your tea a waiting of you. There!"

With which conclusive form of speech, Mattie turned and walked back through the archway. She never ran, still less skipped as most children do, but held feet and head alike steadily progressive, save for the slightest occasional toss of the latter, which, as well as her mode of speech, revealed the element of conceit which had its share in the oddity of the little damsel.

When two strokes of the five had sounded in the ears of Mr. Spelt, he laid his work aside, took his tall hat from one of the corners where it hung on a peg, leaped lightly from his perch into the court, shut his half of the door, told the shoemaker below that he was going to Mr. Kiteley's to tea, and would be obliged if he would fetch him should any one want him, and went through the archway. There was a door to Mr. Kiteley's house under the archway, but the tailor preferred going round the corner to the shop door in Bagot Street. By this he entered Jacob Kiteley's domain, an old-book shop, of which it required some previous knowledge to find the way to the back premises. For the whole cubical space of the shop was divided and subdivided into a labyrinth of bookshelves, those in front filled with decently if not elegantly bound books, and those behind with a multitude innumerable of books in all conditions of dinginess, mustiness, and general shabbiness. Among these Jacob Kiteley spent his time patching and mending them, and drawing up catalogues. He was not one of those booksellers who are so fond of their books that they can not bear to part with them, and therefore when they are fortunate enough to lay their hands upon a rare volume, the highest pleasure they know in life, justify themselves in keeping it by laying a

manuscript price upon it, and considering it so much actual property. Such men, perhaps, know something about the contents of their wares; but while few surpassed Jacob in a knowledge of the outsides of books, from the proper treatment of covers in the varying stages of dilapidation, and of leaves when water-stained or mildewed or dry-rotted to the different values of better and best editions, cut and uncut leaves, tall copies, and folios shortened by the plough into doubtful quartos, he never advanced beyond the title-page, except when one edition differed from another, and some examination was necessary to determine to which the copy belonged. And not only did he lay no fancy prices upon his books, but he was proud of selling them under the market value—which he understood well enough, though he used the knowledge only to regulate his buying. The rate at which he sold was determined entirely by the rate at which he bought. Do not think, my reader, that I have the thinnest ghost of a political economy theory under this: I am simply and only describing character. Hence he sold his books cheaper than any other bookseller in London, contenting himself with a profit proportioned to his expenditure, and taking his pleasure in the rapidity with which the stream of books flowed through his shop. I have known him take threepence off the price he had first affixed to a book, because he found that he had not advertised it, and therefore it had not to bear its share of the expense of the catalogue.

Mr. Spelt made his way through the maze of books into the back shop, no one confronting him, and there found Mr. Kiteley busy over his next catalogue, which he was making out in a school-boy's hand.

"How are you, Spelt?" he said, in an alto voice, in which rung a certain healthy vigor, amounting to determination. "Just in time, I believe. My little woman has been busy in the parlor for the last hour, and I can depend upon her to the minute. Step in."

"Don't let me interrupt you," suggested Mr. Spelt, meekly, and reverentially even, for he thought Mr. Kiteley must be a very learned man indeed to write so much about books, and had at home a collection of his catalogues complete from the year when he first occupied the nest in the passage. I had forgot to say that Mr. Kiteley was Mr. Spelt's landlord, and found him a regular tenant, else he certainly would not have invited him to tea.

"Don't let me interrupt you," said Mr. Spelt.

"Not at all," returned Mr. Kiteley. "I'm very happy to see you, Spelt. You're very kind to my Mattie, and it pleases both of us to have you to tea in our humble way."

"His humble way was a very grand way indeed to poor Spelt—and Mr. Kiteley knew that. Spelt could only rub his nervous delicate hands in token that he would like to say something in reply if he could but find the right thing to say. What hands those were, instinct with life and expression to the finger nails! No hands like them for fine drawing. He would make the worst rent look as if there never had been a rough contact with the nappy surface.

The tailor stepped into the parlor, which opened out of the back shop sideways, and found himself in an enchanted region. A fire—we always see the fire first, and the remark will mean

more to some people than to others—a most respectable fire burned in the grate, and if the room was full of the odor of red herrings, possibly objectionable *per se*, where was the harm when they were going to partake of the bloters? A consequential cat lay on the hearth-rug. A great black oak cabinet, carved to repletion of surface, for which a pro-Raphaelite painter would have given half the price of one of his best pictures, stood at the end of the room. This was an accident, for Mr. Kitley could not appreciate it. But neither would he sell it when asked to do so. He was not going to mix trades, for that was against his creed; the fact being that he had tried so many things in his life that he now felt quite respectable from having settled to one for the rest of his days. But the chief peculiarity of the room was the number of birds that hung around it in cages of all sizes and shapes, most of them covered up now that they might go to sleep.

After Mattie had bestowed her approbation upon Mr. Spelt for coming exactly to the hour, she took the brown tea-pot from the hob, the muffin from before the fire, and three herrings from the top of it, and put them all one after another upon the table. Then she would have placed chairs for them all, but was prevented by the gallantry of Mr. Spelt, and only succeeded in carrying to the head of the table her own high chair, on which she climbed up, and sat enthroned to pour out the tea. It was a noteworthy triad. On opposite sides of the table sat the meek tailor and the hawk-expressed bookseller. The latter had a broad forehead and large clear light eyes. His nose—I never think a face described when the nose is forgotten; Chaucer never omits it—rose from between his eyes as if intending to make the true Roman arch, but having reached the keystone, held on upon the same high level, and did not descend but ceased. He wore no beard, and bore his face in front of him like a banner. A strong pediment of chin, and a long thin-lipped mouth completed an expression of truer good nature. Plenty of clear-voiced speech, a breezy defiance of nonsense in every tone, bore in it a certain cold but fierce friendliness, which would show no mercy to any weakness you might vaunt, but would drag none to the light you abstained from forcing into notice. Opposite to him sat the thoughtful thin-visaged small man, with his hair on end; and between them the staid old-maidenly child, with her hair in bands on each side of the smooth solemnity of her face, the conceit of her gentle nature expressed only in the turn-up of her diminutive nose. The bookseller behaved to her as if she had been a grown lady.

"Now, Miss Kitley," he said, "we shall have tea of the right sort, shan't we?"

"I hope so," answered Mattie, demurely. "Help Mr. Spelt to a herring, father."

"That I will, my princess. There, Mr. Spelt! There's a herring with a roe worth millions. To think now that every one of those eggs would be a fish like that, if it was only let alone!"

"It's a great waste of eggs, ain't it, father?" said Mattie.

"Mr. Spelt won't say so, my princess," returned Mr. Kitley, laughing. "He likes 'em."

"I do like them," said the tailor.

"Well, I dare say they're good for him, and it

don't hurt them much," resumed Mattie, reflectively.

"They'll go to his brains, and make him clever," said Kitley. "And you wouldn't call that a waste, would you, Mattie?"

"Well, I don't know. I think Mr. Spelt's clever enough already. He's too much for me sometimes. I confess I can't always follow him."

The father burst into a loud roar of laughter, and laughed till the tears were running down his face. Spelt would have joined him but for the reverence he had for Mattie, who sat unmoved on her throne at the head of the table, looking down with calm benignity on her father's passion, as if laughter were a weakness belonging to grown-up men, in which they were to be condescendingly indulged by princesses, and little girls in general.

"Well, how's the world behaving to you, Spelt?" asked the bookseller, after various ineffectual attempts to stop his laughter by the wiping of his eyes.

"The world has never behaved ill to me, thank God," answered the tailor.

"Now, don't you trouble yourself to say that. You've got nobody to thank but yourself."

"But I like to thank God," said Mr. Spelt, apologetically. "I forgot that you wouldn't like it."

"Pshaw! pshaw! I don't mind it from you, for I believe you're fool enough to mean what you say. But tell me this, Spelt—did you thank God when your wife died?"

"I tried hard not. I'm afraid I did, though," answered Spelt, and sat staring like one who has confessed, and awaits his penance.

The bookseller burst into another loud laugh, and slapped his hand on his leg.

"You have me there, I grant, Spelt."

But his face grew sober as he added, in a lower but still loud voice—

"I was thinking of my wife, not of yours. Folk say she was a rum un."

"She was a splendid woman," said the tailor. "She weighed twice as much as I do, and her fist—" Here he doubled up his own slender hand, laid it on the table, and stared at it, with his mouth full of muffin. Then, with a sigh, he added, "She was rather too much for me, sometimes. She was a splendid woman, though, when she was sober."

"And what was she when she was drunk?"

This grated a little on the tailor's feelings, and he answered with spirit—

"A match for you or any other man, Mr. Kitley."

The bookseller said, "Bravo, Spelt!" and said no more.

They went on with their tea for some moments in silence.

"Well, princess!" said Mr. Kitley at last, giving an aimless poke to the conversation.

"Well, father," returned Mattie.

Whereupon her father turned to Spelt and said, as if resuming what had passed before—

"Now tell me honestly, Spelt, do you believe there is a God?"

"I don't doubt it."

"And I do. Will you tell me that, if there was a God, he would have a fool like that in the church over the way there, to do nothing but read the service, and a sermon he bought for eightpence, and—"

"From you?" asked Spelt, with an access of interest.

"No, no. I was too near the church for that. But he bought it of Spelman, in Holywell Street.—Well, what was I saying?"

"You was telling us what Mr. Potter did for his money."

"Yes, yes. I don't know any thing else he does but stroke his Piccadilly weepers, and draw his salary. Only I suppose they have some grand name for salary nowadays, out of the Latin Grammar or the Roman Antiquities, or some such, to make it respectable. Don't tell me there's a God, when he puts a man like that in the pulpit. To hear him haw-haw!"

The bookseller's logic was, to say the least of it, Kately. But Spelt was no logician. He was something better, though in a feeble way. He could jump over the dry-stone fences and the cross-ditches of the logician. He was not one of those who stop to answer arguments against going home, instead of making haste to kiss their wives and children.

"I've read somewhere—in a book I dare say you mayn't have in your collection, Mr. Kately—they call it the New Testament—"

There was not an atom of conscious humor in the tailor as he said this. He really thought Mr. Kately might have conscientious scruples as to favoring the sale of the New Testament. Kately smiled, but said nothing.

"I've read"—the tailor went on—"that God winked at some people's ignorance. I dare say he may wink at Mr. Potter's."

"Anyhow, I wouldn't like to be Mr. Potter," said the bookseller.

"No, nor I," returned Spelt. "But just as I let that poor creature, Dolman, cobble away in my ground-floor—though he has never paid me more than half his rent since ever he took it—"

"Is that the way of it? Whew!" said Mr. Kately.

"About and about it," answered the tailor. "But that's not the point."

"What a fool you are then, Spelt, to—"

"Mr. Kately," interposed the tailor with dignity, "do I pay your rent?"

"You've got my receipts, I believe," answered the bookseller, offended in his turn.

"Then I may make a fool of myself if I please," returned Spelt, with a smile which took all offense out of the remark. "I only wanted to say that perhaps God lets Mr. Potter hold the living of St. Jacob's in something of the same way that I let poor Dolman cobble in my ground-floor. No offense, I hope."

"None whatever. You're a good-natured, honest fellow, Spelt; and don't distress yourself, you know, for a week or so. Have half a herring more? I fear this is a soft roe."

"No more, I thank you, Mr. Kately. But all the clergy ain't like Mr. Potter. Perhaps he talks such nonsense because there's nobody there to hear it."

"There's plenty not there to do something for for his money," said Kately.

"That's true," returned the tailor. "But seeing I don't go to church myself, I don't see I've any right to complain. Do you go to church, Mr. Kately?"

"I should think *not*," answered the bookseller. "But there's some one in the shop."

So saying, he started up and disappeared. Presently voices were heard, if not in dispute, yet in difference.

"You won't oblige me so far as that, Mr. Kately?"

"No, I won't. I never pledge myself. I've been too often taken in. No offense. A man goes away and forgets. Send or bring the money, and the book is yours; or come to-morrow. I dare say it won't be gone. But I won't promise to keep it. There."

"Very well, I won't trouble you again in a hurry."

"That is as you please, sir," said the bookseller, and no reply followed.

"That's Mr. Worboise," said Mattie. "I wish father wouldn't be so hard upon him."

"I don't like that young man," said Kately, re-entering. "My opinion is that he's a humbug."

"Miss Burton does not think so," said Mattie, quietly.

"Eh! what, princess?" said her father. "Eh! ah! Well! well!"

"You don't give credit, Mr. Kately?" said the tailor.

"No, not to my own father. I don't know, though, if I had the old boy back again, now he's dead. I didn't behave over well to him, I'm afraid. I wonder if he's in the moon, or where he is, Mr. Spelt, eh? I should like to believe in God now, if it were only for the chance of saying to my father, 'I'm sorry I said so-and-so to you, old man.' Do you think he'll have got over it by this time, Spelt? You know all about those things. But I won't have a book engaged and left and not paid for. I'd rather give credit and lose it, and have done with it. If young Worboise wants the book, he may come for it to-morrow."

"He always pays me—and pleasantly," said Spelt.

"Of course," said Mattie.

"I don't doubt it," said her father; "but I like things neat and clean. And I don't like him. He thinks a deal of himself."

"Surely he's neat and clean enough," said Spelt.

"Now, you don't know what I mean. A man ought always to know what another man means before he makes his remarks. I mean, I like a book to go out of my sight, and the price of it to go into my pocket, right slick off. But here's Dolman come to fetch you, Spelt," said the bookseller, as the cobbler made his appearance at the half-open door of the parlor.

"No, I ain't," said Dolman. "I only come to let the gov'nor know as I'm a going home."

"Where's that?" asked Kately.

"Leastways, I mean going home with a pair o' boots," answered Dolman, evasively, wiping his nose with the back of his hand.

"Ah!" said the bookseller.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MORNING OF CHRISTMAS DAY.

It is but justice to Thomas Worboise to mention that he made no opportunities of going to his "governor's" house after this. But the relations of the families rendered it impossible for him to

avoid seeing Mary Boxall sometimes. Nor did he make any great effort to evade such meetings: and it must be confessed that it was not without a glow of inward satisfaction that he saw her confusion and the rosy tinge that spread over her face and deepened the color of her eyes when they thus happened to meet. For Mary was a soft-hearted and too impressive girl. "I never said any thing to her," were the words with which he would now and then apply an unction to his soul, compounded of self-justification and self-flattery. But he could not keep an outward appearance of coolness correspondent to the real coldness of his selfish heart, and the confusion which was only a dim reflection of her own was sufficient to make poor Mary suppose that feelings similar to her own were at work in the mind of the handsome youth. Why he did not say any thing to her had not yet begun to trouble her, and her love was as yet satisfied with the ethereal luxuries of dreaming and castle-building.

It had been arranged between Amy Worboise and the Boxall girls, that if Christmas Day were fine, they would persuade their fathers to go with them to Hampstead Heath in the morning. How much of this arrangement was owing to sly suggestion on the part of Mary in the hope of seeing Tom, I do not know. I believe Jane contrived that Charles Wither should have a hint of the possibility. It is enough that the plan was accepted by the parents, and that the two families, with the exception of Mrs. Boxall, who could not commit the care of the Christmas dinner to the servants, and the invalid Mrs. Worboise, who, indeed, would always have preferred the chance of a visit from Mr. Simon to the certainty of sunshine and extended prospect, found themselves, after morning service, on the platform of the Highbury railway station, whence they soon reached Hampstead.

The walk from the station, up the hill to the top of the heath, was delightful. It was a clear day, the sun shiing overhead, and the ground sparkling with frost under their feet. The keen, healthy air brought color to the cheeks and light to the eyes of all the party, possibly with the sole exception of Mr. Worboise, who, able to walk uncovered in the keenest weather, was equally impervious to all the gentler influences of Nature. He could not be said to be a disbeliever in Nature, for he had not the smallest idea that she had any existence beyond an allegorical one. What he did believe in was the law, meaning by that neither the Mosaic nor the Christian, neither the law of love nor the law of right, but the law of England, as practiced in her courts of justice. Therefore he was not a very interesting person to spend a Christmas morning with, and he and Mr. Boxall, who was equally a believer in commerce, were left to entertain each other.

Mary Boxall was especially merry; Amy Worboise rognish as usual; Jane Boxall rather silent, but still bright-eyed, for who could tell whom she might meet upon the heath? And with three such girls Tom could not be other than gay, if not brilliant. True, Lucy was alone with her old grandmother in dingy Guild Court; but if she loved him, was not that enough to make her or any other woman happy? And he could not help it besides. And why should he not improve the shining hour because Lucy had no flowers to gather honey from? Besides, was he

not going to meet her the very next day, after much contrivance for concealment? So he was resolved to be merry and "freuen sich des Lebens."

They reached the flag-staff. The sun was getting low, and clouds were gathering behind him. Harrow-on-the-Hill was invisible, but the reservoir gleamed coldly far across the heath. A wind was blowing from the northwest; all London lay south and east in clearness wonderful, for two or three minutes. Then a vapor slowly melted away the dome of St. Paul's; and like a spirit of sorrow, gathered and gathered till that which was full of life to those who were in it, was but a grey cloud to those that looked on from the distant height. Already the young people felt their spirits affected, and as if by a common impulse, set off to walk briskly to the pines above the "Spaniards." They had not gone far, before they met Charles Wither sauntering carelessly along—at least he seemed much surprised to see them. He turned and walked between Jane and Amy, and Mary and Tom were compelled to drop behind, so as not to extend their line unreasonably and occupy the whole path. Quite unintentionally on Tom's part, the distance between the two divisions increased, and when he and Mary reached the pines, the rest of the party had vanished. They had in fact gone down into the Vale of Health, to be out of the wind, and return by the hollow, at the suggestion of Charles Wither, who wished thus to avoid the chance of being seen by Mr. Boxall. When he had taken his leave of them, just as they came in sight of the flag-staff, where Mr. Worboise and Mr. Boxall had appointed to meet them on their return from the pines, Jane begged Amy to say nothing about having met him.

"Oh," said Amy, with sudden and painful illumination, "I am so sorry to have been in the way."

"On the contrary, dear Amy, I should not have known what to say to papa, except you had been with me. I am so much obliged to you."

Thus there was clearly trouble in store for Mr. Boxall, who had never yet known what it was not to have his own way—in matters which he would consider of importance at least.

The two gentlemen had gone into Jack Straw's to have a glass of wine together, in honor of Christmas Day; and while they were seated together before a good fire, it seemed to Mr. Boxall a suitable opportunity for entering on a matter of business.

"What will you say to me, Worboise, when I tell you that I have never yet made a will?"

"I needn't tell you what I think, Boxall. You know well enough. Very foolish of you. Very imprudent, indeed. And I confess I should not have expected it of you, although I had a shrewd suspicion that such was the case."

"How came you to suspect it?"

"To tell the truth, I could not help thinking that as our friendship was not of yesterday, you would hardly have asked any one else to draw up your will but your old friend. So you see it was by no mysterious exercise of intelligence that I came to the conclusion that, not being an unkind or suspicious man, you must be a dilatory, and, excuse me, in this sole point, a foolish man."

"I grant the worst you can say, but you shall say it only till to-morrow—that is if you will

draw up the will, and have it ready for me to sign at any hour you may be at leisure for a call from me."

"I can't undertake it by to-morrow; but it shall be ready by the next day at twelve o'clock."

"That will do perfectly. I must remain 'a foolish man' for twenty-four hours longer—that is all."

"You won't be much the worse for that, except you have an attack of apoplexy to fix you there. But, joking apart, give me my instructions. May I ask how much you have to leave?"

"Oh; somewhere, off and on, about thirty thousand. It isn't much, but I hope to double it in the course of a few years, if things go on as they are doing."

Mr. Worboise had not known so much about his friend's affairs as he had pretended to his son. When he heard the amount, he uttered a slight "Whew!" But whether it meant that the sum fell below or exceeded his expectations, he gave Mr. Boxall no time to inquire.

"And how do you want the sum divided?" he asked.

"I don't want it divided at all. There's no occasion whatever to mention the sum. The books will show my property. I want my wife, in the case of her surviving me, to have the whole of it."

"And failing her?"

"My daughters, of course—equally divided. If my wife lives, there is no occasion to mention them. I want them to be dependent upon her as long as she lives, and so hold the family together as long as possible. She knows my wishes about them in every thing. I have no secrets from her."

"I have only to carry out instructions. I have no right to offer any suggestions."

"That means that you would suggest something. Speak out, man."

"Suppose your daughters wished to marry?"

"I leave all that to their mother, as they must be their own mistresses some day."

"Well, call on me the day after to-morrow, and I shall have the draught at least red. It is done."

When the two girls reached the flag-station, their parents were not there. Jane was first to notice it.

For it precluded questioning as to the time when they had arrived. As thick fast to the large snow-flakes began to fall benedictly, she was rising. But they had not long to wait, for the gentlemen made their appearance, the moist-ness, so busily indeed, that when they joined the girls, they walked away to the railway station without concerning them as to what had become of Mary and Thomas.

When they reached the railway station, Mr. Boxall became suddenly aware that two of the party were missing.

"Why, Jane, where's Mary? And where's Tom? Where did you leave them?"

"Somewhere about the pines. I thought they would have been back long ago."

The two fathers looked at each other, and each seeing that the other looked knowing, then first consented, as he thought, to look knowing himself.

"Well," said Mr. Worboise, "they're old enough to take care of themselves, I suppose. I vote we don't wait for them."

"Serve them right," said Mr. Boxall.

"Oh, don't, papa," interposed Jane.

"Well, Jane, will you stop for them?" said her father.

But a sudden light that flashed into Jane's eyes made him change his tone. He did not know why, but the idea of Charles Wither rose in his mind, and he made haste to prevent Jane from taking advantage of the proposal.

"Come along," he said. "Let them take care of themselves. Come along."

The suspicion had crossed him more than once, that Mr. Wither and Jane possibly contrived to meet without his knowledge, and the thought made him writhe with jealousy; for it lay in his nature to be jealous of every one of whom his wife or his daughters spoke well—that is, until he began to like him himself, when the jealousy, or what was akin to it, vanished. But it was not jealousy alone that distressed him, but the anxiety of real love as well.

By the time they reached Camden Road station, the ground was covered with snow.

When Tom and Mary arrived at the house, some have said they found that the rest of the London had gone.

"Oh, never mind," said Mary, "we shall come back."

I dare say they were from the ark, and will never go without any of the desired world to them.

Partly from false alight! Olive-leaves they nation, Thomas, even when they are destined bank of sand in nest in the branches of the that taken by such be strong notwithstanding, wandered along are no more olive-leaves to gather the sky was I have mercy upon his youths and vapor were they shall grow men and women. edges. They understand me.

stopping thus left the beauties of nature behind down in the horrible mockery of art at Madame they went. Thomas became aware from Lucy's any how that he had not been behaving well to my. He therefore set about being more agreeable, and before they reached Baker Street she had his arm again, and they were talking and laughing gaily enough. Behind them, at some distance, trotted a small apparition which I must now describe.

It was a little girl, perhaps ten years old, looking as wild as any savage in Canadian forest. Her face was pretty, as far as could be judged through the dirt that variegated its surface. Her eyes were black and restless. Her dress was a frock, of what stuff it would have been impossible to determine, scarcely reaching below her knees, and rent upward into an irregular fringe of ribbons that frostily fanned her little legs as she followed the happy couple, in a pair of shoes much too large for her, and already worn into such holes as to afford more refuge for the snow than for her feet. Her little knees were very Mr., and oh! those poor legs, caked and streaked with dirt, and the delicate skin of them thick-fear added to the frost and east winds and his arm was about her—to push through the he said to himself.

Now he understood that Thomas was too much in love with himself to be capable of loving any woman under the sun after a noble and true fashion. He did not love Lucy a great deal better than he loved Mary. Only Mary was an ordinary pretty blonde, and Lucy was dark, with great black eyes, and far more distinguished in appearance than Mary. Besides she was poor,

and that added greatly to the romance of the thing; for it made it quite noble in him to love her, and must make her look up to him with such deserved admiration, that—without reckoning the fact that the one was offered him, and the other only not forbidden because there was as yet no suspicion of his visits in Guild Court—there was positively no room to hesitate in choice between them. Still the preference was not strong enough to keep his heart from beating fast when he found the snow-storm had closed him in with Mary. He had sense enough, however, to turn at once in order to lead her back toward the road. But this was already a matter of difficulty, for there was no path where the storm found them, and with the gathering darkness the snow already hid the high road across the heath; so that the first question was in what direction to go to find it. They kept moving, however, Mary leaning a good deal on Tom's arm, and getting more and more frightened as no path came in

It is. Even Tom began to be anxious about and the r to come of it, and although he did his fine, they effort Mary, he soon found that before them to Hampeion of actual danger the whole much of this arrahed. And now the snow not gession on the part of the wind blew it sharply in Tom, I do not know. I am yet more than mere- that Charles Wither should this mattered much possibility. It is enough that that was all hap- cepted by the parents, and that with the exception of Mrs. Boxall's circuitous fash- commit the care of the Christmas to crying, servants, and the invalid Mrs. Wärther. She indeed, would always have preferread not Tom of a visit from Mr. Simon to the ouagement sunshine and extended prospect, fo himself— selves, after morning service, on the peight near the Highbury railway station, whencanaged to reached Hampstead.

The walk from the station, up the hill to ves top of the heath, was delightful. It was a clear day, the sun shining overhead, and the ground sparkling with frost under their feet. The keen, healthy air brought color to the cheeks and light to the eyes of all the party, possibly with the sole exception of Mr. Worboise, who, able to walk uncovered in the keenest weather, was equally impervious to all the gentler influences of Nature. He could not be said to be a disbeliever in Nature, for he had not the smallest idea that she had any existence beyond an allegorical one. What he did believe in was the law, meaning by that neither the Mosaic nor the Christian, neither the law of love nor the law of right, but the law of England, as practiced in her courts of justice. Therefore he was not a very interesting person to spend a Christmas morning with, and he and Mr. Boxall, who was equally a believer in commerce, were left to entertain each other.

Mary Boxall was especially merry; Worboise rognish as he felt, he kissed him silent, but still bruce it, and went away feeling to be a miserable. He was wet and cold. The momentary fancy for Mary was quite gone out of him, and he could not help seeing that now he had kissed her before her mother he had got himself into a scrape.

Before morning Mary was in a raging fever.

That night Charles Wither spent at a billiard-table in London, playing not high but long, sipping brandy and water all the time, and think-

ing what a splendid girl Jane Boxall was. But in the morning he looked all right.

CHAPTER VII.

PEEPIE.

THOMAS woke the next morning with a well-deserved sense of something troubling him. This too was a holiday, but he did not feel in a holiday mood. It was not from any fear that Mary might be the worse for her exposure, neither was it from regret for his conduct toward her. What made him uncomfortable was the feeling rather than thought that now Mrs. Boxall, Mary's mother, had a window that overlooked his premises, a window over which he had no legal hold, but which, on the contrary, gave her a hold over him. It was a window also of which she was not likely, as he thought, to neglect the advantage. Nor did it console him to imagine what Lucy would think, or—which was of more weight with Thomas—say or do, if she should happen to hear of the affair of yesterday. This, however, was very unlikely to happen; for she had not one friend in common with her cousins, except just her lover. To-day being likewise a holiday, he had arranged to meet her at the Marble Arch, and take her to that frightful source of amusement, Madame Tussaud's. Her morning engagement led her to that neighborhood, and it was a safe place to meet in—far from Highbury, Hackney, and Bagot Street.

The snow was very deep. Mrs. Boxall tried to persuade Lucy not to go. But where birds can pass lovers can pass, and she was just finishing her lesson to resplendent little Miriam as Thomas got out of an omnibus at Park Street, that he might saunter up on foot to the Marble

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have kvision of Hyde Park was such as rarely been wite eye of a Londoner. It was almost

Thus ly beautiful. Even while waiting for Mr. Boxall, Thomas could not help taking nowas not to trees. Every bough, branch, twig, he would emport a ghost of itself, or rather a

The two gen of itself upon the opposite side to have a gla black shadow fell. The whole Christmas Day huge growth of that kind of gether beftat brain-coral, and the whole park a all a suitable coralline growths. But against ter of busich was one canopy of unfallen snow,

“What the sun behind it, the brilliant trees tell you more like coral still, grey namely, and

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Yonomas had not sauntered and gazed for more than a few minutes before he saw Lucy coming down Great Cumberland Street toward him. Instead of crossing the street to meet her, he stood and watched her approach. There was even some excuse for his coolness, she looked so picturesque sitting over the spotless white in her violet dress, her red cloak, her grebe muff. I do not know what her bonnet was; for if a bonnet be suitable, it allows the face to show as it ought, and who can think of a bonnet then! But I know that they were a pair of very dainty morocco boots that made little holes in the snow across Oxford Street toward the Marble Arch where Thomas stood, filled, I fear, with more pride

In the lovely figure that was coming to *him* than love of her.

"Have I kept you waiting long, Thomas?" said Lucy, with the sweetest of smiles, her teeth white as snow in the summer flush of her face.

"Oh! about ten minutes," said Thomas. It wasn't five. "What a cold morning it is!"

"I don't feel it much," answered Lucy. "I came away the first moment I could. I am sorry I kept you waiting."

"Don't mention it, Lucy. I should be only too happy no wait for you as long every morning," said Thomas, gallantly, not tenderly.

Lucy did not relish the tone. But what could she do? A tone is one of the most difficult things to fix a complaint upon. Besides, she was not in a humor to complain of any thing if she could help it. And, to tell the truth, she was a little afraid of offending Thomas, for she looked up to him ten times more than he deserved.

"How lovely you red cloak looked—quite a splendor—crossing the snow!" he continued.

And Lucy received this as a compliment to herself, and smiled again. She took his arm—for lovers will do that sometimes after it is quite out of fashion. But will it be believed? Thomas did not altogether like her doing so, just because it was out of fashion.

"What a delightful morning it is," she said. "Oh! do look at the bars of the railing."

"Yes, I see. The snow has stuck to them. But how can you look at such vulgar things as iron stanchions when you have such a fairy-forest as that before you?" said the reader of Byron, who was not seldom crossed by a feeling of dismay at finding Lucy, as he thought, decidedly unpoetical. He wanted to train her in poetry, as with shame let it flow from my pen, in religion.

"But just look here," insisted Lucy, drawing him closer to the fence. "You are short-sighted, surely, Thomas. Just look there."

"Well, I see nothing but snow on both sides of the paling-bars," returned Thomas.

"Now I am sure you are short-sighted. It is snow on the one side, but not on the other. Look at the lovely crystals."

On the eastern quarter of each upright bar the snow had accumulated and stuck fast to the depth of an inch: the wind had been easterly. The fall had ceased some hours before morning, and a strong frost had set in. That the moisture in the air should have settled frozen upon the iron would not have been surprising; what Lucy wondered at was, that there should be a growth, half an inch long, of slender crystals, like the fungous growth commonly called mould, only closer, standing out from the bar horizontally, as if they had grown through it out of the soil of the snow exactly opposite to it on the other side. On the one side was a beaten mass of snow, on the other a fantastic little forest of ice.

"I do not care about such microscopic beauties," said Thomas, a little annoyed that she whom he thought unpoetical could find out something lovely sooner than he could: for he was of those in whom a phantasm of self-culture is one of the forms taken by their selfishness. They regard this culture in relation to others with an eye to superiority, and do not desire it purely for its own sake. "Those trees are much more to my mind now."

"Ah, but I do not love the trees less. Come into the park, and then we can see them from all sides."

"The snow is too deep. There is no path there."

"I don't mind it. My boots are very thick."

"No, no; come along. We shall get to Madame Tussaud's before there are many people there. It will be so much nicer."

"I should like much better to stay here awhile," said Lucy, half vexed and a little offended.

But Thomas did not heed her. He led the way up Oxford Street. She had dropped his arm, and now walked by his side.

"A nice lover to have!" I think I hear some of my girl readers say. But he was not so bad as this always, or even gentle-tempered Lucy would have quarreled with him, if it had been only for the sake of getting rid of him. The weight of yesterday was upon him.—And while they were walking up the street, as handsome and fresh a couple as you would find in all London, Mary was lying in her bed talking wildly about Thomas.

Alas for the loving thoughts of youth and maidens that go out like the dove from the ark, and find no room on the face of the desired world to fold their wings and alight! Olive-leaves they will gather in plenty, even when they are destined never to build a nest in the branches of the olive-tree. Let such be strong notwithstanding, even when there are no more olive-leaves to gather, for God will have mercy upon his youths and maidens, and they shall grow men and women. Let who can, understand me.

Having thus left the beauties of nature behind them for the horrible mockery of art at Madame Tussaud's, Thomas became aware from Lucy's silence that he had not been behaving well to her. He therefore set about being more agreeable, and before they reached Baker Street she had his arm again, and they were talking and laughing gaily enough. Behind them, at some distance, trotted a small apparition which I must now describe.

It was a little girl, perhaps ten years old, looking as wild as any savage in Canadian forest. Her face was pretty, as far as could be judged through the dirt that variegated its surface. Her eyes were black and restless. Her dress was a frock, of what stuff it would have been impossible to determine, scarcely reaching below her knees, and rent upward into an irregular fringe of ribbons that frostily fanned her little legs as she followed the happy couple, in a pair of shoes much too large for her, and already worn into such holes as to afford more refuge for the snow than for her feet. Her little knees were very black, and oh! those poor legs, caked and streaked with dirt, and the delicate skin of them thickened and cracked with frost and east winds and neglect! They could carry her through the snow satisfactorily, however—with considerable suffering to themselves, no doubt. But Poppie was not bound to be miserable because Poppie's legs were any thing but comfortable: there is no selfishness in not being sorry for one's own legs. Her hair, which might have been expected to be quite black, was mingled with a reddish tinge from exposure to the hot sun of the preceding summer. It hung in tangled locks about her,

without protection of any sort. How strange the snow must have looked upon it: no doubt she had been out in the storm! Her face peeped out from among it with the wild innocence of a gentle and shy but brave little animal of the forest. Purposely she followed Lucy's red cloak. But this was not the first time she had followed her: like a lost pup she would go after this one and that one—generally a lady—for a whole day from place to place, obedient to some hidden drawing of the heart. She had often seen Lucy start from Guild Court, and had followed her to the railway; and, at length, by watching first one station and then another, had found out where she went every morning. Knowing then that she could find her when she pleased, she did not follow her more than twice a week or so, sometimes not once—just as the appetite woke in her for a little of her society. But my reader must see more of her before he or she will be interested enough in her either to please me or to care to hear more about the habits of this little wild animal of the stone forest of London. She had never seen Lucy with a gentleman before. I wonder if she had ever in her little life walked side by side with any body herself: she was always trotting behind. This was the little girl whom Miss Matilda Kiteley, her father's princess, called Poppie, and patronized, although she was at least two years older than herself, as near as could be guessed. Nor had she any other name; for no one knew where she had come from, or who were her parents, and she herself cared as little about the matter as any body.

The lovers were some distance ahead of Poppie, as they had been all the way, when they entered the passage leading to the wax works. The instant she lost sight of them so suddenly, Poppie started in pursuit, lost one of her great shoes, and, instead of turning to pick it up, kicked the other after it—no great loss—and scampered at full barefooted speed over the snow which was here well trodden. They could hardly have more than disappeared at the farther end when she arrived at the entrance.

Poppie never thought about *might* or *might not*, but only about *could* or *could not*. So the way being open, and she happening to have no mind that morning to part with her company before she was compelled, she darted in to see whether she could not get another peep of the couple. Not only was the red cloak a fountain of warmth to Poppie's imagination, but the two seemed so happy together that she felt in most desirable society.

Thomas was in the act of paying for admission at the turn-stile, when she caught sight of them again. The same moment that he admitted them, the man turned away from his post. In an instant Poppie had crept through underneath, dodged the man, and followed them, taking care, however, not to let them see her, for she had not the smallest desire to come to speech with them.

The gorgeousness about her did not produce much effect upon Poppie's imagination. What it might have produced was counteracted by a strange fancy that rose at once under the matted covering of that sun-burnt hair. She had seen more than one dead man carried home upon a stretcher. She had seen the miserable funerals of the poor, and the desolate coffin put in the

earth. But she knew that of human beings there were at least two very different breeds, of one of which she knew something of the habits and customs, while of the other she knew nothing, except that they lived in great houses, from which they were carried away in splendid black carriages, drawn by ever so many horses with great black feathers growing out of their heads. What became of them after that she had not the smallest idea, for no doubt they would be disposed of in a manner very different from the funerals she had been allowed to be present at. When she entered the wax-work exhibition, the question was solved. This was one of the places to which they carried the grand people after they were dead. Here they set them up dressed in their very best, to stand there till—ah! till when, Poppie? That question she made no attempt to answer. She did not like the look of the dead people. She thought it a better way to put them in the earth and have done with them, for they had a queer look, as if they did not altogether like the affair themselves. And when one of them stared at her, she dodged its eyes, and had enough to do between them all and the showman; for though Poppie was not afraid of any body, she had an instinctive knowledge that it was better to keep out of some people's way. She followed the sight of her friend, however, till the couple went into the "chamber of horrors," as if there was not horror enough in seeing humanity imitated so abominably in the outer room.

Yes, I am sorry to say it, Lucy went into that place, but she did not know what she was doing, and it was weeks before she recovered her self-respect after it. However, as Thomas seemed interested, she contrived to endure it for a little while—to endure, I do not mean the horror, for that was not very great—but the vulgarity of it all. Poppie lingered, not daring to follow them, and at length, seeing a large party arrive, began to look about for some place of refuge. In the art of vanishing she was an adept, with an extraordinary proclivity toward holes and corners. In fact, she could hardly see a hole big enough to admit her without darting into it at once to see if it would do—for what, she could not have specified—but for general purposes of refuge. She considered all such places handy, and she found one handy now.

Close to the entrance, in a recess, was a couch, and on this couch lay a man. He did not look like the rest of the dead people, for his eyes were closed. Then the dead people went to bed sometimes, and to sleep. Happy dead people—in a bed like this! For there was a black velvet cover thrown over the sleeping dead man so that nothing but his face was visible; and to the eyes of Poppie this pall looked so soft, so comfortable, so enticing! It was a place to dream in. And could there be any better hiding-place than this? If the man was both dead and sleeping, he would hardly object to having her for a companion. But as she sent one parting peep round the corner of William Pitt or Dick Turpin, after her friends, ere she forsook them to lie down with the dead, one of the attendants caught sight of her, and advanced to expel the dangerous intruder. Poppie turned and fled, sprang into the recess, crept under the cover like a hunted mouse, and lay still, the bed-fellow

of no less illustrious a personage than the Duke of Wellington, and cold as he must have been, Poppie found him warmer than her own legs. The man never thought of following her in that direction, and supposed that she had escaped as she had managed to intrude.

Poppie found the place so comfortable that she had no inclination to change her quarters in haste. True, it was not nice to feel the dead man when she put out foot or hand; but then she need not put out foot or hand. And Poppie was not used to feeling warm. It was a rare sensation, and she found it delightful. Every now and then she peeped from under the *mortcloth*, for the duke was supposed to be lying in state, to see whether Thomas and Lucy were coming. But at length, what with the mental and physical effects of warmth and comfort combined, she fell fast asleep, and dreamed she was in a place she had been in once before, though she had forgotten all about it. From the indefinite account she gave of it, I can only conjecture that it was the embodiment of the vaguest memory of a motherly bosom; that it was her own mother's bosom she recalled even thus faintly, I much doubt. But from this undefined bliss she was suddenly aroused by a rough hand and a rough voice loaded with a curse. Poppie was used to curses, and did not mind them a bit—somehow they never hurt her—but she was a little frightened at the face of indignant surprise and wrath which she saw bending over her when she awoke. It was that of one of the attendants, with a policeman beside him, for whom he had sent before he awoke the child, allowing her thus a few moments of unconscious blessedness, with the future hanging heavy in the near distance. But the duke had slept none the less soundly that she was by his side, and had lost none of the warmth that she had gained. It was well for Ruth that there were no police when she slept in Boaz's barn; still better that some of the clergymen, who serve God by reading her story on the Sunday, were not the magistrates before whom the police carried her. With a tight grasp on her arm, Poppie was walked away in a manner uncomfortable certainly to one who was accustomed to trot along at her own sweet will—and a sweet will it was, that for happiness was content to follow and keep within sight of some one that drew her, without longing for even a word of grace—to what she had learned to call *the jug*, namely, the police-prison; but my reader must not spend too much of his stock of sympathy upon Poppie; for she did not mind it much. To be sure in such weather the jug was very cold, but she had the memories of the past to comfort her, the near past, spent in the society of the dead duke, warm and consoling. When she fell asleep on the hard floor of the *lock-up*, she dreamed that she was dead and buried, and trying to be warm and comfortable as she ought to be in her grave, only somehow or another she could not get things to come right: the wind would blow through the chinks of her pauper's coffin; and she wished she had been a duke or a great person generally, to be so grandly buried as they were in the cemetery in Baker Street. But Poppie was far less to be pitied for the time, cold as she was, than Mary Boxall, lying half asleep and half awake and all dreaming in that comfortable room, with a blazing fire, and her

own mother sitting beside it. True, likewise, Poppie heard a good many bad words and horrid speeches in the jug, but she did not heed them much. Indeed, they did not even distress her, she was so used to them; nor, upon occasion, was her own language the very pink of propriety. How could it be? The vocabulary in use in the houses she knew had ten vulgar words in it to one that Mattie for instance would hear. But whether Poppie, when speaking the worst language that ever crossed her lips, was lower, morally and spiritually considered, than the young lord in the nursery, who, speaking with articulation clear cut as his features, and in language every word of which is to be found in Johnson, refuses his brother a share of his tart and gobbles it up himself, there is to me, knowing that if Poppie could swear she could share, no question whatever. God looks after his children in the cellars as well as in the nurseries of London.

Of course she was liberated in the morning, for the police magistrates of London are not so cruel as some of those country clergymen who, not content with preaching about the justice of God from the pulpit, must seat themselves on the magistrate's bench to dispense the injustice of men. If she had been brought before some of them for sleeping under a hay-stack, and having no money in her pocket, as if the night sky besides being a cold tester to lie under were something wicked as well, she would have been sent to prison; for instead of believing in the blessedness of the poor, they are of Miss Kilmansegg's opinion, "that people with nought are naughty." The poor little thing was only reprimanded for being where she had no business to be, and sent away. But it was no wonder if after this adventure she should know Thomas again when she saw him; nay, that she should sometimes trot after him for the length of a street or so. But he never noticed her.

CHAPTER VIII.

MR. SIMON'S ATTEMPT.

THE next day the sun shone brilliantly upon the snow as Thomas walked to the counting-house. He was full of pleasant thoughts crossed and shadowed by a few of a different kind. He was not naturally deceitful, and the sense of having a secret which must get him into trouble if it were discovered, and discovered it must be some day, could not fail to give him uneasiness notwithstanding the satisfaction which the remembrance of the secrecy of a love affair afforded him. Nothing, however, as it seemed to him, could be done, for he was never ready to do any thing to which he was neither led nor driven. He could not generate action, or rather, he had never yet begun to generate action.

As soon as he reached Bagot Street, he tapped at the glass door, and was admitted to Mr. Boxall's room. He found him with a look of anxiety upon a face not used to express that emotion.

"I hope Miss Mary—" Thomas began, with a little hesitation.

"She's very ill," said her father; "very ill, indeed. It was enough to be the death of her. Excessively imprudent."

Now Mary had been as much to blame, if there was any blame at all, for the present results of the Christmas morning, as Thomas; but he had still generosity enough left not to say so to her father.

"I am very sorry," he said. "We were caught in the snow, and lost our way."

"Yes, yes, I know. I oughtn't to be too hard upon young people," returned Mr. Boxall, remembering perhaps that he had his share of the blame in leaving them so much to themselves. "I only hope she may get through it. But she's in a bad way. She was quite delirious last night."

Thomas was really concerned for a moment, and looked so. Mr. Boxall saw it, and spoke more kindly.

"I trust, however, that there is not any immediate danger. It's no use you coming to see her. She can't see any body but the doctor."

This was a relief to Thomas. But it was rather alarming to find that Mr. Boxall clearly expected him to want to go to see her.

"I am very sorry," he said again; and that was all he could find to say.

"Well, well;" returned his master, accepting the words as if they had been an apology. "We must do our work, anyhow. Business is the first thing, you know."

Thomas took this as a dismissal, and retired to the outer office, in a mood considerably different from that which Mr. Boxall attributed to him.

A clerk's duty is a hard one, and this ought to be acknowledged. Neither has he any personal interest in the result of the special labor to which he is for the time devoted, nor can this labor have much interest of its own beyond what comes of getting things square, and the sense of satisfaction which springs from activity, and the success of completion. And it is not often that a young man is fortunate enough to have a master who will not only appreciate his endeavors, but will let him know that he does appreciate them. There are reasons for the latter fact beyond disposition and temperament. The genial employer has so often found that a strange process comes into operation in young and old, which turns the honey of praise into the poison of self-conceit, rendering those to whom it is given disagreeable, and ere long insufferable, that he learns to be very chary in the administration of the said honey, lest subordinates think themselves indispensable, and even neglect the very virtues which earned them the praise. A man must do his duty, if he would be a free man, whether he likes it or not, and whether it is appreciated or not. But if he can regard it as the will of God, the work not fallen upon him by chance, but *given* him to do, understanding that every thing well done belongs to His kingdom, and every thing ill done to the kingdom of darkness, surely even the irksomeness of his work will be no longer insuperable. But Thomas had never been taught this. He did not know that his day's work had all any thing to do with the saving of his soul. Poor Mr. Simon gave him of what he had, like his namesake at the gate of the temple, but all he had served only to make a man creep, it could not make him stand up and walk. "A servant with this clause,"—that is the clause, "*for thy sake*,"—wrote George Herbert:

"A servant with this clause
Makes drudgery divine;
Who sweeps a room, as for thy laws,
Makes that and the action fine."

But Mr. Simon could not understand the half of this, and nothing at all of the essential sacredness of the work which God would not give a man to do if it were not sacred. Hence Thomas regarded his work only as drudgery; considered it beneath him; judged himself fitter for the army, and had hankerings after gold lace. He dabbled with the fancy that there was a mistake somewhere in the arrangement of mundane affairs, a serious one, for was he not fitted by nature to move in some showy orbit, instead of being doomed to rise in Highbury, shine in Bagot Street, and set yet again in Highbury? And so, although he did not absolutely neglect his work, for he hated to be found fault with, he just did it, not entering into it with any spirit; and as he was clever enough, things went on with tolerable smoothness.

That same evening, when he went home from his German lesson of a quarter of an hour, and his interview with Lucy of an hour and a quarter, he found Mr. Simon with his mother. Thomas now had left the room; for his conscience now made him wish to avoid Mr. Simon—who had pressed him so hard with the stamp of religion that the place was painful although the impression was fast disappearing.

"Thomas," said his mother, with even more than her usual solemnity, "Thomas, come here. We want to have some conversation with you."

"I have not had my tea yet, mother."

"You can have your tea afterward. I wish you to come here now."

Thomas obeyed, and threw himself with some attempt at nonchalance into a chair.

"Thomas, my friend," began Mr. Simon, with a tone—how am I to describe it? I could easily, if I chose to use a contemptuous word, but I do not wish to intrude on the region of the comic satirist, and must therefore use a periphrase—with the tone which corresponds to the long face some religious people assume the moment the conversation turns toward sacred things, and in which a certain element of the ludicrous because affected goes far to destroy the solemnity, "I am uneasy about you. Do not think me interfering, for I watch for your soul as one that must give an account. I have to give an account of you, for at one time you were the most promising seal of my ministry. But your zeal has grown cold; you are unfaithful to your first love; and when the Lord cometh as a thief in the night, you will be to him as one of the lukewarm, neither cold nor hot, my poor friend. He will spue you out of his mouth. And I may be to blame for this, though at present I know not how. Ah, Thomas! Thomas! Do not let me have shame of you at his appearing. The years are fleeting fast, and although he delay his coming, yet he *will* come; and he will slay his enemies with the two-edged sword that proceedeth out of his mouth."

Foolish as Mr. Simon was, he was better than Mr. Potter, if Mr. Kiteley's account of him was correct; for he was in earnest, and acted upon his belief. But he knew nothing of human nature, and as Thomas grew older, days, even hours, had widened the gulf between them, till his poor

feeble influences could no longer reach across it, save as unpleasant reminders of something that had been. Happy is the youth of whom a sensible good clergyman has a firm hold—a firm human hold, I mean—not a priestly one such as Mr. Simon's. But if the clergyman be feeble and foolish, the worst of it is, that the youth will transfer his growing contempt for the clergyman to the religion of which he is such a poor representative. I know another clergyman—perhaps my readers may know him too—who instead of lecturing Thomas through the medium of a long string of Scripture phrases, which he would have had far too much reverence to use after such a fashion, would have taken him by the shoulder, and said, "Tom, my boy, you've got something on your mind. I hope it's nothing wrong. But whatever it is, mind you come to me if I can be of any use to you."

To such a man there would have been a chance of Tom's making a clean breast of it—not yet, though—not before he got into deep water. But Mr. Simon had not the shadow of a chance of making him confess. How could Thomas tell such a man that he was in love with one beautiful girl, and had foolishly got himself into a scrape with another?

By this direct attack upon him in the presence of his mother, the man had lost the last remnant of his influence over him, and, in fact, made him feel as if he should like to punch his head, if it were not that he could not bear to hurt the meek little sheep. He did not know that Mr. Simon had been rather a bruiser at college—small and meek as he was—only that was before his conversion. If he had cared to defend himself from such an attack, which I am certain he would not have doubled fist to do, Thomas could not have stood one minute before him.

"Why do you not speak, Thomas?" said his mother gently.

"What do you want me to say, mother?" asked Thomas in return, with rising anger. He never could resist except his temper came to his aid.

"Say what you ought to say," returned Mrs. Worboise, more severely.

"What ought I to say, Mr. Simon?" said Thomas, with a tone of meek submission, not so marked, however, that Mr. Simon, who was not sensitive, detected it.

"Say, my young friend, that you will carry the matter to the throne of grace, and ask the aid—"

But I would rather not record sacred words which, whatever they might mean in Mr. Simon's use of them, mean so little in relation to my story.

Thomas, however, was not yet so much of a hypocrite as his training had hitherto tended to make him, and again he sat silent for a few moments, during which his mother and her friend sat silent likewise, giving him time for reflection. Then he spoke, anxious to get rid of the whole unpleasant affair.

"I will promise to think of what you have said, Mr. Simon."

"Yes, Thomas, but *how* will you think of it?" said his mother.

Mr. Simon, however, glad to have gained so much of a concession, spoke more genially. He would not drive the matter farther at present.

"Do, dear friend, and may He guide you into

the truth. Remember, Thomas, the world and the things of this world are passing away. You are a child no longer, and are herewith called upon to take your part, for God or against him—"

And so on, till Thomas grew weary as well as annoyed.

"Will you tell me what fault you have to find with me?" he said at last. "I am regular at the Sunday School, I am sure."

"Yes, that we must allow, and heartily," answered Mr. Simon, turning to Mrs. Worboise as if to give her the initiative, for he thought her rather hard with her son; "only I would just suggest to you, Mr. Thomas—I don't ask you the question, but I would have you ask yourself—whether your energy is equal to what it has been? Take care lest, while you teach others, you yourself should be a castaway. Remember that nothing but faith in the merits—"

Thus started again, he went on, till Thomas was forced loose from all sympathy with things so unmercifully driven upon him, and vowed in his heart that he would stand it no longer.

Still speaking, Mr. Simon rose to take his leave. Thomas, naturally polite, and anxious to get out of the scrutiny of those cold blue eyes of his mother, went to open the door for him, and closed it behind him with a sigh of satisfaction. Then he had his tea and went to his own room, feeling wrong, and yet knowing quite well that he was going on to be and to do wrong. Saints'hip like his mother's and Mr. Simon's was out of his reach.

Perhaps it was. But there were other things essential to saints'hip that were within his reach—and equally essential to the manliness of a gentleman, which he would have been considerably annoyed to be told that he was in much danger of falling short of, if he did not in some way or other mend his ways, and take heed to his goings.

The next morning mother and pastor held a long and, my reader will believe, a dreary consultation over the state of Thomas. I will not afflict him with the recital of what was said and resaid a dozen times before they parted. If Mr. Worboise had overheard it, he would have laughed, not heartily, but with a perfection of contempt, for he despised all these things, and would have despised better things too, if he had known them.

The sole result was that his mother watched Thomas with yet greater assiduity; and Thomas began to feel that her eyes were never off him, and to dislike them because he feared them. He felt them behind his back. They haunted him in Bagot Street. Happy with Lucy, even there those eyes followed him, as if searching to find out his secret; and a vague fear kept growing upon him that the discovery was at hand. Hence he became more and more cunning to conceal his visits. He dreaded what questions those questioning eyes might set the tongue asking. For he had not yet learned to lie. He prevaricated, no doubt; but lying may be a step yet farther on the downward road.

One good thing only came out of it all: he grew more and more in love with Lucy. He almost loved her.

CHAPTER IX.

BUSINESS.

FOR some days Mr. Boxall was so uneasy about Mary that he forgot his appointment with Mr. Worboise. At length, however, when a thaw had set in, and she had begun to improve, he went to call upon his old friend.

"Ah, Boxall! glad to see you. What a man you are to make an appointment with! Are you aware, sir, of the value of time in London, not to say in this life generally? Are you aware that bills are due at certain dates, and that the man who has not money at his banker's to meet them is dishonored—euphemistically shifted to the bill?"

Thus jocosely did Mr. Worboise play upon the well-known business habits of his friend, who would rather, or at least believed he would rather, go to the scaffold than allow a bill of his to be dishonored. But Mr. Boxall was in a good humor too this morning.

"At least, Worboise," he answered, "I trust when the said bill is dishonored, you may not be the holder."

"Thank you. I hope not. I don't like losing money."

"Oh, don't mistake me! I meant for my sake, not yours."

"Why?"

"Because you would skin the place before you took the pound of flesh. I know you!"

Mr. Worboise winced. Mr. Boxall thought he had gone too far, that is, had been rude. But Mr. Worboise laughed aloud.

"You flatter me, Boxall," he said. "I had no idea I was such a sharp practitioner. But you ought to know best. We'll take care, at all events, to have this will of yours right."

So saying, he went to a drawer to get it out. But Mr. Boxall still feared that his friend had thought him rude.

"The fact is," he said, "I have been so uneasy about Mary."

"Why? What's the matter?" interrupted Mr. Worboise, stopping on his way across the room.

"Don't you know?" returned Mr. Boxall, in some surprise. "She's never got over that Hampstead Heath affair. She's been in bed ever since."

"God bless me!" exclaimed the other. "I never heard a word of it. What was it?"

So Mr. Boxall told as much as he knew of the story, and any way there was not much to tell.

"Never heard a word of it!" repeated the lawyer.

The statement made Mr. Boxall more uneasy than he cared to show.

"But I must be going," he said; "so let's have this troublesome will signed and done with."

"Not in the least a troublesome one, I assure you. Rather too simple, I think. Here it is."

And Mr. Worboise began to read it over point by point to his client.

"All right," said the latter. "Mrs. Boxall to have every thing to do with it as she pleases. It is the least I can say, for she has been a good wife to me."

"And will be for many years to come, I hope," said Mr. Worboise.

"I hope so. Well, go on."

Mr. Worboise went on.

"All right," said his client again. "Failing my wife, my daughters to have every thing, as indeed they will whether my wife fails or not—at last, I mean, for she would leave it to them, of course."

"Well," said the lawyer, "and who comes next?"

"Nobody. Who did you think?"

"It's rather a short—doesn't read quite business-like. Put in any body just for the chance—a poor one, ha! ha! with such a fine family as yours."

"Stick yourself in then, old fellow; and though it won't do you any good, it'll be an expression of my long esteem and friendship for you."

"What a capital stroke!" thought Mr. Boxall. "I've surely got that nonsense out of his head now. He'll never think of it more. I was country-bred."

"Thank you, old friend," said Mr. Worboise quietly, and entered his own name in succession.

The will was soon finished, signed, and witnessed by two of Mr. Worboise's clerks.

"Now what is to be done with it?" asked Mr. Worboise.

"Oh, you take care of it for me. You have more stowage—for that kind of thing, I mean, than I have. I should never know where to find it."

"If you want to make any alteration in it, there's your box, you know."

"Why, what alteration could I want to make in it?"

"That's not for me to suppose. You might quarrel with me though, and want to strike out my name."

"True. I might quarrel with my wife too, mightn't I, and strike her name out?"

"It might happen."

"Yes; any thing might happen. Meantime I am content with sufficient probabilities."

"By the way, how is that son of mine getting on?"

"Oh, pretty well. He's regular enough, and I hear no complaints of him from Stopper; and he's sharp enough, I assure you."

"But you're not over-satisfied with him yourself, eh?"

"Well, to speak the truth, between you and me, I don't think he's cut out for our business."

"That's much the same as saying he's of no use for business of any sort."

"I don't know. He does his work fairly well, as I say, but he don't seem to have any heart in it."

"Well, what do you think he is fit for now?"

"I'm sure I don't know. You could easily make a fine gentleman of him."

Mr. Boxall spoke rather bitterly, for he had already had fitting doubts in his mind whether Tom had been behaving well to Mary. It had become very evident since her illness that she was very much in love with Tom, and that he should be a hair's-breadth less in love with her was offense enough to rouse the indignation of a man like Mr. Boxall, good-natured as he was; and that he had never thought it worth while even to mention the fact of her illness to his father, was strange to a degree.

"But I can't afford to make a fine gentleman

of him. I've got his sister to provide for as well as my fine gentleman. I don't mean to say that I could not leave him as much, perhaps more than you can to *each* of your daughters; but girls are so different from boys. Girls can live upon anything; fine gentlemen can't." And here Mr. Worboise swore.

"Well, it's no business of mine," said Mr. Boxall. "If there's any thing I can do for him, of course, for your sake, Worboise—"

"The rascal has offended him somehow," said Mr. Worboise to himself. "It's that Hamstead business. Have patience with the young dog," he said aloud. "That's all I ask you to do for him. Who knows what may come out of him yet?"

"That's easy to do. As I tell you, there's no fault to find with him," answered Mr. Boxall, afraid that he had exposed some feeling that had better have been hidden. "Only one must speak the truth."

With these words Mr. Boxall took his leave.

Mr. Worboise sat and cogitated.

"There's something in that rascal's head, now," he said to himself. "His mother and that Simon will make a spoon of him. I want to get some sense out of him before he's translated to kingdom-come. But how the deuce to get any sense out when there's so precious little in! I found seventeen volumes of Byron on his bookshelves last night. I'll have a talk to his mother about him. Not that that's of much use!"

To her husband Mrs. Worboise always wore a resigned air, believing herself unequally yoked to an unbeliever with a bond which she was not at liberty to break, because it was enjoined upon her to win her husband by her chaste conversation coupled with fear. Therefore when he went into her room that evening, she received him as usual with a look which might easily be mistaken, and not much mistaken either, as expressive of a sense of injury.

"Well, my dear," her husband began, in a conciliatory, indeed jocose, while yet complaining tone, "do you know what this precious son of ours has been about? Killing Mary Boxall in a snow-storm, and never telling me a word about it. I suppose you know the whole story, though? You *might* have told me."

"Indeed, Mr. Worboise, I am sorry to say I know nothing about Thomas nowadays. I can't understand him. He's quite changed. But if I were not laid on a couch of suffering—not that I complain of that—I should not come to *you* to ask what he was about. I should find out for myself."

"I wish to goodness you were able."

"Do not set your wish against *His* will," returned Mrs. Worboise with a hopeless reproof in her tone, implying that it was of no use to say so, but she must bear her testimony notwithstanding.

"Oh! no, no," returned her husband; "nothing of the sort. Nothing farther from my intention. But what is to be done about this affair? You know it would please you as well as me to see him married to Mary Boxall. She's a good girl, that you know."

"If I were sure that she was a changed character, there is nothing I should like better, I confess—that is, of worldly interest."

"Come, come, Mrs. Worboise. I don't think you're quite fair to the girl."

"What *do* you mean, Mr. Worboise?"

"I mean that just now you seemed in considerable doubt whether or not your son was a changed character, as you call it. And yet you say that if Mary Boxall were a changed character, you would not wish any thing more—that is, of worldly interest—than to see him married to Mary Boxall. Is that fair to Mary Boxall? I put the question merely."

"There would be the more hope for him; for the Scripture says that the believing wife may save her husband."

Mr. Worboise winked inwardly to himself. Because his wife's religion was selfish, and therefore irreligious, therefore religion was a lumbag, and *therefore* his conduct might be as selfish as ever he chose to make it.

"But how about Mary? Why should you wish her, if she was a changed character, to lose her advantage by marrying one who is not so?"

"She might change him, Mr. Worboise, as I have said already," returned the lady, decisively; for she might speak with authority to one who knew nothing about these things.

"Yes. But if Thomas were changed, and Mary not—what then?"

Mrs. Worboise murmured something not quite audible about "I and the children whom God hath given me."

"At the expense of the children he hasn't given you!" said Mr. Worboise, at a venture; and chuckled now, for he saw his victory in her face.

But Mr. Worboise's chuckle always made Mrs. Worboise *shut up*, and not another word could he get out of her that evening. She never took refuge in her illness, but in an absolute dogged silence, which she persuaded herself that she was suffering for the truth's sake.

Her husband's communication made her still more anxious about Thomas, and certain suspicions she had begun to entertain about the German master became more decided. In her last interview with Mr. Simon, she had hinted to him that Thomas ought to be watched, that they might know whether he really went to his German lesson or went somewhere else. But Mr. Simon was too much of a gentleman not to recoil from the idea, and Mrs. Worboise did not venture to press it. When she saw him again, however, she suggested—I think I had better give the substance of the conversation, for it would not in itself be interesting to my readers—she suggested her fears that his German master had been mingling German theology with his lessons, and so corrupting the soundness of his faith. This seemed to Mr. Simon very possible indeed, for he knew how insidious the teachers of such doctrines are, and glad to do something definite for his suffering friend, he offered to call upon the man and see what sort of person he was. This offer Mrs. Worboise gladly accepted, without thinking that of all men to find out any insidious person, Mr. Simon, in his simplicity, was the least likely.

But now the difficulty arose that they knew neither his name nor where he lived, and they could not ask Thomas about him. So Mr. Simon undertook the task of finding the man by inquiry in the neighborhood of Bagot Street.

"My friend," he said, stepping the next morning into Mr. Kiteley's shop,—he had a way of call-

ing every body his friend, thinking so to recommend the Gospel.

"At your service, sir," returned Mr. Kately, brusquely, as he stepped from behind one of the partitions in the shop, and saw the little clerical apparition which had not even waited to see the form of the human being to whom he applied the sacred epithet.

"I only wanted to ask you," drawled Mr. Simon, in a drawl both of earnestness and unconscious affectation, "whether you happen to know of a German master somewhere in this neighborhood."

"Well, I don't know," returned Mr. Kately, in a tone that indicated a balancing rather than pondering operation of the mind. For although he was far enough from being a Scotchman, he always liked to know why one asked a question, before he cared to answer it. "I don't know as I could recommend one over another."

"I am not in want of a master. I only wish to find out one that lives in this neighborhood."

"I know at least six of them within a radius of one-half mile, taking my shop here for the centre of the circle," said Mr. Kately, consequentially. "What's the man's name you want, sir?"

"That is what I can not tell you."

"Then how am I to tell you, sir?"

"If you will oblige me with the names and addresses of those six you mention, one of them will very likely be the man I want."

"I dare say the clergyman wants Mr. Moloch, father," said a voice from somewhere in the neighborhood of the floor, "the foreign gentleman that Mr. Worboise goes to see up the court."

"That's the very man, my child," responded Mr. Simon. "Thank you very much. Where shall I find him?"

"I'll show you," returned Mattie.

"Why couldn't he have said so before?" remarked Mr. Kately to himself with indignation. "But it's just like them."

By *them* he meant clergymen in general.

"What a fearful name—*Moloch!*" reflected Mr. Simon, as he followed Mattie up the court. He would have judged it a name of bad omen, had he not thought *omen* rather a wicked word. The fact was, the German's name was Molken, a very innocent one, far too innocent for its own-er, for it means only *whay*.

Herr Molken was a *ne'er-do-weel* student of Heidelberg, a clever fellow, if not a scholar, whose bad habits came to be too well known at home for his being able to indulge them there any longer, and who had taken refuge in London from certain disagreeable consequences which not unfrequently follow aberrant efforts to procure the means of gambling and general dissipation. Thomas had as yet spent so little time in his company, never giving more than a quarter of an hour or so to his lesson, that Molken had had no opportunity of influencing him in any way. But he was one of those who, the moment they make a new acquaintance, begin examining him for the sake of discovering his weak points, that they may get some hold of him. He measured his own strength or weakness by the number of persons of whom at any given time he had a hold capable of being turned to advantage in some way or other in the course of events. Of all dupes, one with some intellect and no prin-

ciple, weakened by the trammels of a religious system with which he is at strife, and which therefore hangs like a millstone about his neck, impedes his every motion, and gives him up to the mercy of his enemy, is the most thorough prey to the pigeon-plucker, for such a one has no recuperative power, and the misery of his conscience makes him abject. Molken saw that Tom was clever, and he seemed to have some money—if he could get this hold of him in any way, it might be "to the welfare of his advantage."

The next lesson fell on the evening after Mr. Simon's visit in Guild Court, and Mr. Molken gave Thomas a full account of the "beseech" he had had from "one soft ghostly," who wanted to find out something about Thomas, and how he had told him that Mr. Worboise was a most excellent and religious young man; that he worked very hard at his German, and that he never spent less (here Mr. Molken winked at Thomas) than an hour and a half over Krummacher or some other religious writer. All this Mr. Simon had faithfully reported to Mrs. Worboise, never questioning what Mr. Molken told him, though how any one could have looked at him without finding cause to doubt whatever he might say, I can hardly imagine. For Mr. Molken was a small wiry man, about thirty, with brows overhanging his eyes like the eaves of a Swiss cottage, and rendering those black and wicked luminaries blacker and more wicked still. His hair was black, his beard was black, his skin was swarthy, his forehead was large; his nose looked as if it had been made of putty and dabbed on after the rest of his face was finished; his mouth was sensual; and, in short, one was inclined to put the question in the gospel—Whether hath sinned, this man or his parents? He could, notwithstanding, make himself so agreeable, had such a winning carriage and dignified deference, that he soon disarmed the suspicion caused by his appearance. He had, besides, many accomplishments, and seemed to know every thing—at least to a lad like Thomas, who could not detect the assumption which not unfrequently took the place of knowledge. He manifested also a genuine appreciation of his country's poetry, and even the short lessons to which Thomas submitted had been enlivened by Herr Molken's enthusiasm for Goëthe. If those of his poems which he read and explained to Thomas were not of the best, they were none the worse for his purposes.

Now he believed he had got by Mr. Simon's aid the hold that he wanted. His one wink, parenthetically introduced above, revealed to Thomas that he was master of his secret, and Thomas felt that he was, to a considerable degree, in his hands. This, however, caused him no apprehension.

His mother, although in a measure relieved, still cherished suspicions of German theology which the mention of Krummacher had failed to remove. She would give her son a direct warning on the subject. So when he came into her room that evening, she said—

"Mr. Simon has been making some friendly inquiries about you, Thomas. He was in the neighborhood, and thought he might call on Mr. Moloch—what a dreadful name! Why have you nothing to say to me about your studies? Mr.

Simon says you are getting quite a scholar in German. But it is a dangerous language, Thomas, and full of errors. Beware of yielding too ready an ear to the seductions of human philosophy and the undermining attacks of will-worship."

Mrs. Worboise went on in this strain, intelligible neither to herself nor her son, seeing she had not more than the vaguest notion of what she meant by German theology, for at least five minutes, during which Thomas did not interrupt her once. By allowing the lies of his German master to pass thus uncontradicted, he took another long stride down the inclined plane of deceit.

After this he became naturally more familiar with Mr. Molken. The German abandoned books, and began to teach him fencing, in which he was an adept, talking to him in German all the while, and thus certainly increasing his knowledge of the language, though not in a direction that was likely within fifty years to lead him to the mastery of commercial correspondence in that tongue.

CHAPTER X.

MOTHER AND DAUGHTER.

MR. BOXALL, with some difficulty, arising from reluctance, made his wife acquainted with the annoyance occasioned him by the discovery of the fact that Tom Worboise had not even told his father that Mary was ill.

"I'm convinced," he said, "that the young rascal has only been amusing himself—flirting, I believe, you women call it."

"I'm none so sure of that, Richard," answered his wife. "You leave him to me."

"Now, my dear, I won't have you throwing our Mary in any fool's face. It's bad enough as it is. But I declare I would rather see her in her grave than scorned by any man."

"You may see her there without before long," answered his wife, with a sigh.

"Eh! What! She's not worse, is she?"

"No; but she hasn't much life left in her. I'm afraid it's settling on her lungs. Her cough is something dreadful to hear, and tears her to pieces."

"It's milder weather, though, now, and that will make a difference before long.—Now, I know what you're thinking of, my dear, and I won't have it. I told the fellow she wasn't fit to see any body."

"Were you always ready to talk about me to every one that came in your way, Richard?" asked his wife, with a good-humored smile.

"I don't call a lad's father and mother any one that comes in the way—though, I dare say, fathers and mothers are in the way sometimes," he added, with a slight sigh.

"Would you have talked about me to your own father, Richard?"

"Well, you see, I wasn't in his neighborhood. But my father was a—a—stiff kind of man to deal with."

"Not worse than Mr. Worboise, depend upon it, my dear."

"But Worboise would like well enough to have our Mary for a daughter-in-law."

"I dare say. But that mightn't make it

easier to talk to him about her—for Tom, I mean. For my part, I never did see two such parents as poor Tom has got. I declare it's quite a shame to sit upon that handsome young lad—and amiable—as they do. He can hardly call his nose his own. I wouldn't trust that Mr. Worboise, for my part, no, not if I was drowning."

"Why, wife!" exclaimed Mr. Boxall, both surprised and annoyed, "this is something new. How long—"

But his wife went on regardless.

"And that mother of his! It's a queer kind of religion that freezes the life out of you the moment you come near her. How ever a young fellow could talk about his sweetheart to either of them is more than I can understand—or you either, my dear. So don't look so righteous over it."

Mrs. Boxall's good-natured audacity generally carried every thing before it, even with more dangerous persons than her own husband. He could not help—I do not say smiling, but trying to smile; and though the smile was rather a failure, Mrs. Boxall chose to take it for one. Indeed she generally put her husband into good humor by treating him as if he were in a far better humor than he really was in. It never does any good to tell a man that he is cross. If he is, it makes him no better, even though it should make him vexed with himself; and if he isn't cross, nothing is more certain to make him cross, without giving him a moment's time to consult the better part of him.

Within the next eight days, Mrs. Boxall wrote to Tom as follows:

"MY DEAR MR. THOMAS—Mary is much better, and you need not be at all uneasy about the consequences of your expedition to the North Pole on Christmas Day. I am very sorry I was so cross when you brought her home. Indeed, I believe I ought to beg your pardon. If you don't come and see us soon, I shall fancy that I have seriously offended you. But I knew she never could stand exposure to the weather, and I suppose that was what upset my temper. Mary will be pleased to see you.—I am ever yours sincerely,
JANE BOXALL."

Tom received this letter before he left for town in the morning. What was he to do? Of course he must go and call there, as he styled it, but he pronounced it a great bore. He was glad the poor girl was better; but he couldn't help it, and he had no fancy for being hunted up after that fashion. What made him yet more savage was, that Mr. Boxall was absolutely surly—he had never seen him so before—when he went into his room upon some message from Mr. Stopper. He did not go that day nor the next.

On the third evening he went;—but the embarrassment of feeling that he ought to have gone before was added to the dislike of going at all, and he was in no enviable condition of mind when he got off the Clapton omnibus. Add to this that an unrelenting east wind was blowing, and my reader will believe that Tom Worboise was more like a man going to the scaffold than one going to visit a convalescent girl.

There was something soothing, however, in

the glow of warmth and comfort which the opening door revealed. The large hall carpeted throughout, the stove burning in it most benevolently, the brightness of the thick stair-roads, like veins of gold in the broad crimson carpeting of the generously wide stair-case—all was consoling to Thomas, whose home was one of the new straight-up-and-down, stucco-faced abominations which can never be home-like except to those who have been born in them—and no thanks to them, for in that case a rabbit-hutch will be home-like. Mrs. Boxall was one of those nice, stout, kindly, middle-aged women who have a positive genius for comfort. Now there is no genius in liking to be comfortable; but there is some genius in making yourself comfortable, and a great deal more in making other people comfortable. This Mrs. Boxall possessed in perfection; and you felt it the moment you entered her house, which, like her person, summer and winter, was full of a certain autumnal richness—the bloom of peaches and winter apples. And what was remarkable was that all this was gained without a breath of scolding to the maids. She would ring the bell ten times an hour for the same maid, if necessary. She would ring at once—no matter how slight the fault—a scrap of paper—a cornerful of dust—a roll of flue upon that same stair-carpet—but not even what might make an indulgent mistress savage—a used lucifer match—would upset the temper of Mrs. Boxall.—Why do I linger on these trifles, do you ask, reader? Because I shall have to part with Mrs. Boxall soon; and—shall I confess it?—because it gives me a chance of reading a sly lecture to certain ladies whom I know, but who can not complain when I weave it into a history. My only trouble about Mrs. Boxall is, to think in what condition she must have found herself when she was no longer in the midst of any of the circumstances of life—had neither house nor clothes, nor even the body she had been used to dress with such matronly taste, to look after.

It was with a certain tremor that Tom approached the door of Mary Boxall's room. But he had not time to indulge it, as I fear he might have done if he had had time, for, as I have said, he prized feelings, and had not begun even to think about actions.

What a change from the Mary of the snow-storm! She lay on a couch near the fire, pale and delicate, with thin white hands, and altogether an altered expression of being. But her appearance of health had always been somewhat boastful. Thomas felt that she was far lovelier than before, and approached her with some emotion. But Mary's illness had sharpened her perceptions. There was no light in the room but that of the fire, and it lightened and gloomed over her still face, as the clouds and the sun do over a landscape. As the waters shine out and darken again in the hollows, so her eyes gleamed and vanished, and in the shadow Thomas could not tell whether she was looking at him or not. But then Mary was reading his face like a book in a hard language, which yet she understood enough to read it. Very little was said between them, for Mary was sad and weak, and Thomas was sorrowful and perplexed. She had been reckoning on this first visit from Thomas ever since she had recovered enough to choose what

she would think about; and now it was turning out all so different from what she had pictured to herself. Her poor heart sank away somewhere, and left a hollow place where it had used to be. Thomas sat there, but there was a chasm between them, not such as she any longer sought to cross, but which she would have wider still. She wished he would go. A few more common-places across the glimmering fire, and it sank, as if sympathetic, into a sullen gloom, and the face of neither was visible to the other. Then Thomas rose with the effort of one in a nightmare dream. Mary held out her hand to him. He took it in his, cold to the heart. The fire gave out one flame which flickered and died. In that light she looked at him—was it reproachfully? He thought so, and felt that her eyes were like those of one trying to see something at a great distance. One pressure of her hand, and he left her. He would gladly have shrunk into a nut-shell. "Good-bye, Thomas," "Good-bye, Mary," were the last words that passed between them.

Outside the room he found Mrs. Boxall.

"Are you going already, Mr. Thomas?" she said in an uncertain kind of tone.

"Yes, Mrs. Boxall," was all Tom had to reply with.

Mrs. Boxall went into her daughter's room, and shut the door. Thomas let himself out, and walked away.

She found Mary lying staring at the fire, with great dry eyes, lips pressed close together, and face even whiter than before.

"My darling child!" said the mother.

"It's no matter, mother. It's all my own foolish fault. Only bed again will be so dreary now."

The mother made some gesture, which the daughter understood.

"No, mother; don't say a word. I won't hear a word of that kind. I'm a good deal wiser already than I used to be. If I get better, I shall live for you and papa."

A dreadful fit of coughing interrupted her.

"Don't fancy I'm going to die for love," she said, with a faint attempt at a smile. "I'm not one of that sort. If I die, it'll be of a good honest cough, that's all. Dear mother, it's nothing, I declare."

Thomas never more crossed that threshold. And ever after, Mr. Boxall spoke to him as a paid clerk, and nothing more. So he had to carry some humiliation about with him. Mr. Stopper either knew something of the matter, or followed the tone of his principal. Even Charles Wither was short with him after a while. I suppose Jane told him that he had behaved very badly to Mary. So Tom had no friend left but Lucy, and was driven nearer to Mr. Molken. He still contrived to keep his visits at Guild Court, except those to Mr. Molken, a secret at home. But I think Mr. Stopper had begun to suspect, if not to find him out.

I have not done with the Boxalls yet, though there is henceforth an impassable gulf between Tom and them.

As the spring drew on, Mary grew a little better. With the first roses Uncle John Boxall came home from the Chinese Sea, and took up his residence for six weeks or so with his brother. Mary was fond of Uncle John, and his appear-

ance at this time was very opportune. A more rapid improvement was visible within a few days of his arrival. He gave himself up almost to the invalid; and as she was already getting over her fancy for Tom, her love for her uncle came in to aid her recovery.

"It's the smell of the salt water," said he, when they remarked how much good he had done her; "and more of it would do her more good yet."

They thought it better not to tell him any thing about Tom. But one day after dinner, in a gush of old feelings, brought on by a succession of reminiscences of their childhood, Richard told John all about it, which was not much. John swore, and kept pondering the matter over.

CHAPTER XI.

MATTIE FOR POPPIE.

ONE bright morning, when the flags in the passage were hot to her feet, and the shoes she had lost in the snow-storm had not the smallest chance of recurring to the memory of Poppie, in this life at least, Mattie was seated with Mr. Spelt in his workshop, which seemed to the passer-by to be supported, like the roof of a chapter-house, upon the single pillar of Mr. Dolman, with his head for a capital—which did not, however, branch out in a great many directions. She was not dressing a doll now, for Lucy had set her to work upon some garments for the poor, Lucy's relation with whom I will explain by and by.

"I've been thinking, mother," she said—to Mr. Spelt of course—"that I wonder how ever God made me. Did he cut me out of something else, and join me up, do you think? If he did, where did he get the stuff? And if he didn't, how did he do it?"

"Well, my dear, it would puzzle a wiser head than mine to answer that question," said Mr. Spelt, who plainly judged ignorance a safer refuge from Mattie than any knowledge he possessed upon the subject. Her question, however, occasioned the return, somehow or other, of an old suspicion which he had not by any means cherished, but which would force itself upon him now and then, that the splendid woman, Mrs. Spelt, "had once ought" to have had a baby, and, somehow, he never knew what had come of it. She got all right again, and the baby was nowhere.

"I wish I had thought to watch while God was a making of me, and then I should have remembered how he did it," Mattie resumed. "Ah! but I couldn't," she added, checking herself, "for I wasn't made till I was finished, and so I couldn't remember."

This was rather too profound for Mr. Spelt to respond to in any way. Not that he had not a glimmering of Mattie's meaning, but that is a very different thing from knowing what to answer. So he said nothing, except what something might be comprised in a bare assent. Mattie, however, seemed bent on forcing conversation, and, finding him silent, presently tried another vein.

"Do you remember a conversation we had, in this very place"—that was not wonderful, anyhow—"some time ago—before my last birth-

day—about God being kinder to some people than to other people?" she asked.

"Yes, I do," answered Mr. Spelt, who had been thinking about the matter a good deal since. "Are you of the same mind still, Mattie?"

"Well, yes, and no," answered Mattie. "I think now there may be something in it I can't quite get at the bottom of. Do you know, mother, I remembered all at once the other day, that when I was a little girl, I used to envy Poppie. Now, where ever was there a child that had more of the blessings of childhood than me?"

"What made you envy Poppie, then, Mattie?"

"Well, you see my father's shop was rather an awful place, sometimes. I never told you, mother, what gained me the pleasure of your acquaintance. Ever since I can remember—and that is a very long time ago now—I used now and then to grow frightened at father's books. Sometimes, you know, they were all quiet enough. You would generally expect books to be quiet, now wouldn't you? But other times—well, they wouldn't be quiet. At least, they kept thinking all about me, till my poor head couldn't bear it any longer. That always was my weak point, you know."

Mr. Spelt looked with some anxiety at the pale face and great forehead of the old little woman, and said—

"Yes, yes, Mattie. But we've got over all that, I think, pretty well by now."

"Well, do you know, Mr. Spelt, I have not even yet got over my fancies about the books. Very often, as I am falling asleep, I hear them all thinking;—they can hardly help it, you know, with so much to think about inside them. I don't hear them exactly, you know, for the one thinks into the other's thinks—somehow, I can't tell—and they blot each other out like, and there is nothing but a confused kind of a jumble in my head till I fall asleep. Well, it was one day, very like this day—it was a hot summer forenoon, wasn't it, mother?—I was standing at that window over there. And Poppie was playing down in the court. And I thought what a happy little girl she was, to go where she pleased in the sunshine, and not need to put on any shoes. Father wouldn't let me go where I liked. And there was nothing but books everywhere. That was my nursery then. It was all round with books. And some of them had dreadful pictures in them. All at once the books began talking so loud as I had never heard them talk before. And I thought with myself—'I won't stand this any longer. I will go away with Poppie.'

"So I ran down stairs, but because I couldn't open the door into the court, I had to watch and dodge father among the book-shelves. And when I got out, Poppie was gone—and then, what next, mother?"

"Then my thread knotted, and that always puts me out of temper, because it stops my work. And I always look down into the court when I stop. Somehow that's the way my eyes do of themselves. And there I saw a tiny little maiden staring all about her as if she had lost somebody, and her face looked as if she was just going to cry. And I knew who she was, for I had seen her in the shop before. And so I called to her and she came. And I asked her what was the matter."

"Well, and I said, 'It's the books that will keep talking;' didn't I?"

"Yes. And I took you up beside me.—But you was very ill after that, and it was long before you came back again after that first time."

This story had been gone over and over again between the pair; but every time that Mattie wanted to rehearse the one adventure of her life, she treated it as a memory that had just returned upon her. How much of it was an original impression and how much a rewriting by the tailor upon the blotted tablets of her memory, I can not tell.

"Well, where was I?" said Mattie, after a pause, laying her hands on her lap and looking up at the tailor with eyes of inquiry.

"I'm sure I don't know, Mattie," answered Mr. Spelt.

"I was thinking, you know, that perhaps Poppie has her share of what's going, after all."

"And don't you think," suggested her friend, "that perhaps God doesn't want to keep all the good-doing to himself, but leaves room for us to have a share in it? It's very nice work that you're at now—isn't it, Mattie?"

"Well, it is."

"As good as dressing dolls?"

"Well, it's no end of better."

"Why?"

"Because the dolls don't feel a bit better for it, you know."

"And them that'll wear that flannel petticoat will feel better for it, won't they?"

"That they will, I know."

"But suppose every body in the world was as well off as you and me, Mattie—you with your good father, and—"

"Well, my father ain't none so good, just. He swears sometimes."

"He's good to you, though, ain't he?"

"I don't know that either, mother: he spoils me," answered Mattie, who seemed to be in a more than usually contradictory humor this morning.

"Supposing, though, that every body had a father that spoiled them, you wouldn't have any such clothes to make, you know?"

"But they wouldn't want them."

"And you would be forced to go back to your dolls as have no father or mother and come across the sea in boxes."

"I see, I see, mother. Well, I suppose I must allow that it is good of God to give us a share in making people comfortable. You see he could do it himself, only he likes to give us a share. That's it, ain't it, mother?"

"That's what I mean, Mattie."

"Well, but you'll allow it does seem rather hard that I should have this to do now, and there's Poppie hasn't either the clothes to wear or to make."

"Can't you do something for Poppie, then?"

"Well, I'll think about it, and see what I can do."

Here Mattie laid aside her work, crept on all fours to the door, and peeped over into the passage below.

"Well, Poppie," she began, in the intellectually condescending tone which most grown people use to children, irritating some of them by it considerably,—“Well, Poppie, and how do you do?”

Poppie heard the voice and looked all round,

but not seeing where it came from, turned and scudded away under the arch. Though Mattie knew Poppie, Poppie did not know Mattie, did not know her voice at least. It was not that Poppie was frightened exactly—she hardly ever was frightened at any thing, not even at a policeman, but she was given to scudding; and when any thing happened she did not precisely know what to do with, she scudded; at least if there was no open drain or damaged boarding at hand. But she did not run far this time. As soon as she got under the shelter of the arch, she turned behind a sort of buttress that leaned against the bookseller's house, and peeped back toward the court.

At that moment Lucey came out of the house. She came down the passage, and as Mattie was still leaning over the door, or the threshold rather, of the workshop, she saw her, and stopped. Thereupon Poppie came out of her “coign of vantage,” and slowly approached, just like a bird or a tame rabbit—only she was not by any means so tame as the latter.

“Are you getting on with that petticoat, Mattie?” said Lucey.

“Yes, miss, I am. Only not being used to any thing but boys' clothes, I am afraid you won't like the tailor's stitch, miss.

“Never mind that. It will be a curiosity, that's all.—But what do you think, Mattie! The kind lady who gives us this work to do for the poor people, has invited all of us to go and spend a day with her.”

Mattie did not answer. Lucey thought she did not care to go. But she was such a oddity that she wanted very much to take her.

“She has such a beautiful garden, Mattie! And she's so kind.”

Still Mattie made no reply. Lucey would try again.

“And it's such a beautiful house, too, Mattie! I'm sure you would like to see it. And,” she added, almost reduced to her last resource, she would give us such a nice dinner, I know!”

This at length burst the silence, but not as Lucey had expected.

“Now that's just what I'm determined I will not stand,” said the little maid.

“What do you mean, Mattie?” exclaimed Lucey, surprised and bewildered.

“I'll tell you what I mean, and that see'n enough,” said Mattie. “It's all very kind of Mrs. Morginturn to ask you and me, what ar-well-to-do people, and in comfortable circumstances, as people say, to go and spend this day or that with her. And do you know, Mr. Spelt!—here Mattie drew herself in and turned her face right round from Lucey to the tailor, for the side of her mouth which she used for speech was the left, and the farthest from Spelt—“it just comes into my head that this kind lady who gives me petticoats to make instead of doll's trowsers, is doing the very thing you read about last night out of the New Testament before I went into bed. It's so nice now there's light enough to read a little before we part for the night! ain't it, mother?”

“I know, I know,” said the tailor in a low voice, not wishing to intrude himself into the conversation.

“What did Mr. Spelt read to you, Mattie?” asked Lucey.

"He read about *somebody*—"

It was very remarkable how Mattie would use the name of God, never certainly with irreverence, but with a freedom that seemed to indicate that to her he was chiefly if not solely an object of metaphysical speculation or, possibly, of investigation; while she hardly ever uttered the name of the Saviour, but spoke of him as *Somebody*. And I find that I must yet farther interrupt the child herself to tell an anecdote about her which will perhaps help my reader to account for the fact I am about to finish telling. She was not three years old when she asked her mother, a sweet, thoughtful woman, in many ways superior to her husband, though not intellectually his equal—who made the tree in Wood Street? Her mother answered, of course, "God made it, my pet;" for, by instinct, she never spoke of her God without using some term of endearment to her child. Mattie answered— "I would like it better if a man made it"—a cry after the humanity of God—a longing in the heart of the three years' child for the Messiah of God. Her mother did not know well enough to tell her that a man, yes, *the man* did make them—"for by Him all things were made;"—but Mattie may have had some undefined glimmering of the fact, for, as I have said, she always substituted *Somebody* for any name of the Lord. I can not help wishing that certain religious people of my acquaintance would, I do not say follow queer little Mattie's example, but take a lesson from queer little Mattie.

"He read about *somebody* saying you shouldn't ask your friends and neighbors who could do the same for you again, but you should ask them that couldn't, because they hadn't a house to ask you to, like Poppie there."

Lucy looked round and saw the most tattered little scarecrow—useless even as such in the streets of London, where there are only dusty little sparrows and an occasional raven—staring at—I can not call it a group—well, it was a group vertically, if not laterally—and not knowing or caring what to make of it, only to look at Lucy, and satisfy her undefined and undefinable love by the beholding of its object. She loved what was lovely without in the least knowing that it was lovely, or what lovely meant. And while Lucy gazed at Poppie, with a vague impression that she had seen the child before, she could not help thinking of the contrast between the magnificent abode of the Morgensterns—for magnificent it was even in London—and the lip of the nest from which the strange child preached down into the world the words "friends and neighbors."

But she could say nothing more to Mattie till she had told, word for word, the whole story to Mrs. Morgenstern, who, she knew, would heartily enjoy the humor of it. Nor was Lucy, who loved her Lord very truly, even more than she knew, though she was no theologian like Thomas, in the least deterred from speaking of *Somebody*, by the fact that Mrs. Morgenstern did not receive him as the Messiah of her nation. If he did not hesitate to show himself where he knew he would not be accepted, why should she hesitate to speak his name? And why should his name not be mentioned to those who, although they had often been persecuted in his name by those who did not understand his mind, might well be

proud that the man who was conquering the world by his strong, beautiful will, was a Jew?

But from the rather severe indisposition of her grandmother, she was unable to tell the story to Mrs. Morgenstern till the very morning of the gathering.

CHAPTER XII.

A COMPARISON.

CAN I hope to move my readers to any pitiful sympathy with Mrs. Worboise, the whole fabric of whose desires was thus gliding into an abyss? That she is not an interesting woman, I admit; but at the same time, I venture to express a doubt whether our use of the word *uninteresting* really expresses any thing more than our own ignorance. If we could look into the movements of any heart, I doubt very much whether that heart would be any longer uninteresting to us. Come with me, reader, while I endeavor, with some misgiving, I confess, to open a peep into the heart of this mother, which I have tried hard, though with scarcely satisfactory success, to understand.

Her chief faculty lay in negations. Her whole life was a kind of negation—a negation of warmth, a negation of impulse, a negation of beauty, a negation of health. When Thomas was a child, her chief communication with him was in negatives. "You must not; you are not; do not;" and so on. Her theory of the world was humanity deprived of God. Because of something awful in the past, something awful lay in the future. To escape from the consequences of a condition, which you could not help, you must believe certain things after a certain fashion, hold in fact certain theories with regard to the most difficult questions, on which too you were incapable of thinking correctly. Him who held these theories you must regard as a fellow-favorite of heaven; who held them not you would do well to regard as a publican and a sinner, even if he should be the husband in your bosom. All the present had value only of reference to the future. All your strife must be to become something you are not at all now, to feel what you do not feel, to judge against your nature, to regard every thing in you as opposed to your salvation, and God who is far away from you, and whose ear is not always ready to hear, as your only deliverer from the consequences he has decreed, and this in virtue of no immediate relation to you, but from regard to another whose innocent suffering is to our guilt the only counterpoise weighty enough to satisfy his justice. All her anxiety for her son turned upon his final escape from punishment. She did not torment her soul, her nights were not sleepless with the fear that her boy should be unlike Christ, that he might do that which was mean, selfish, dishonest, cowardly, vile, but with the fear that he was or might be doomed to an eternal suffering.

Now, in so far as this idea had laid hold of the boy, it had aroused the instinct of self-preservation mingled with a repellent feeling in regard to God. All that was poor and common and selfish in him was stirred up on the side of religion; all that was noble (and of that there was far more than my reader will yet fancy) was stirred up against it. The latter, however, was put down

by degrees, leaving the whole region, when the far outlook of selfishness should be dimmed by the near urgings of impulse, open to the inroads of the enemy, enfeebled and ungarrisoned. Ah! if she could have told the boy, every time his soul was lifted up within him by any thing beautiful, or great, or true, "That, my boy, is God—God telling you that you must be beautiful, and great, and true, else you can not be his child!" If every time he uttered his delight in flower or bird, she had, instead of speaking of sin and shortcoming, spoken of love and aspiration toward the Father of Light, the God of Beauty! If she had been able to show him that what he admired in Byron's heroes, even, was the truth, courage, and honesty, hideously mingled, as it might be, with cruelty, and conceit, and lies! But almost every thing except the Epistles seemed to her of the devil and not of God. She was even jealous of the Gospel of God, lest it should lead him astray from the interpretation she put upon it. She did not understand that nothing can convince of sin but the vision of holiness; that to draw near to the Father is to leave self behind; that the Son of God appeared that by the sight of himself he might convince the world of sin. But then hers was a life that had never broken the shell, while through the shell the worm of suffering had eaten, and was boring in to her soul. Have pity and not contempt, reader, who would not be like her. She did not believe in her own love even as from God, and therefore she restrained it before the lad. So he had no idea of how she loved him. If she had only thrown her arms about him, and let her heart out toward him, which surely it is right to do sometimes at least, how differently would he have listened to what she had to say! His heart was being withered on the side next his mother for lack of nourishment: there are many lives ruined because they have not had tenderness enough. Kindness is not tenderness. She could not represent God to the lad. If, instead of constantly referring to the hell that lies in the future, she had reminded him of the beginnings of that hell in his own bosom, appealing to himself whether there was not a faintness there that indicated something wrong, a dull pain that might grow to a burning agony, a consciousness of wrong-doing, thinking, and feeling, a sense of a fearful pit and a miry clay within his own being from which he would gladly escape, a failing even from the greatness of such grotesque ideals as he loved in poetry, a meanness, paltriness, and at best insignificance of motive and action,—and then told him that out of this was God stretching forth the hand to take and lift him, that he was waiting to exalt him to a higher ideal of manhood than any thing which it had entered into his heart to conceive, that he would make him clean from the defilement which he was afraid to confess to himself because it lowered him in his own esteem,—then perhaps the words of his mother, convincing him that God was not against him but for him, on the side of his best feelings and against his worst, might have sunk into the heart of the weak youth, and he would straightway have put forth what strength he had, and so begun to be strong. For he who acts has strength, is strong, and will be stronger. But she could not tell him this: she did not know it herself. Her religion was some-

thing there, then; not here, now. She would give Mr. Simon a five-pound note for his Scripture-reading among the poor, and the moment after refuse the request of her needle-woman from the same district who begged her to raise her wages from eighteen pence to two shillings a day. Religion—the bond between man and God—had nothing to do with the earnings of a sister, whose pale face told of "penury and pine," a sadder story even than that written upon the countenance of the invalid, for to labor in weakness, longing for rest, is harder than to endure a good deal of pain upon a sofa. Until we begin to learn that the only way to *serve* God in any real sense of the word is to serve our neighbor, we may have knocked at the wicket-gate, but I doubt if we have got one foot across the threshold of the kingdom.

Add to this condition of mind a certain uncomfortable effect produced upon the mother by the son's constantly reminding her of the father whom she had quite given up trying to love, and I think my reader will be a little nearer to the understanding of the relation, if such it could well be called, between the two. The eyes of both were yet unopened to the poverty of their own condition. The mother especially said that she was "rich, and had need of nothing," when she was "wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." But she had a hard nature to begin with, and her pain occupied her all the more that she neither sought nor accepted sympathy. And although she was none the less a time-server and a worldly-minded woman that she decried worldliness and popery, and gave herself to the saving of her soul, yet the God who makes them loves even such people and knows all about them; and it is well for them that he is their judge and not we.

Let us now turn to another woman—Mrs. Morgenstern. I will tell you what she was like. She was a Jewess and like a Jewess. But there is as much difference between Jewesses as there is between Englishwomen. Is there any justice in fixing upon the lowest as *the type*? How does the Scotchman like to have his nation represented; by the man outside the tobacco-shop—or by the cantankerous logician and theologian so well known to some of us? There is a Jewess that flaunts in gorgeous raiment and unclean linen; and there is a Jewess noble as a queen, and pure as a daisy—fit to belong to that nation of which Mary the mother was born. Mrs. Morgenstern was of the latter class—tall, graceful, even majestic in the fashion of her form and carriage. Every feature was Jewish, and yet she might have been English, or Spanish, or German just as well. Her eyes were dark—black, I would say, if I had ever seen black eyes—and proud, yet with a dove-like veil over their fire. Sometimes there was even a trouble to be seen in them, as of a rainy mist amid the glow of a southern sky. I never could be quite sure what this trouble meant. She was rich, therefore she had no necessity; she was not avaricious, and therefore she had no fear of dying in the work-house. She had but one child, therefore she was neither wearied with motherhood, nor a sufferer from suppressed maternity, moved by which divine impulse so many women take to poodles instead of orphans. Her child was healthy and active, and gave her no anxiety.

That she loved her husband, no one who saw those eastern eyes rest upon him for a moment could doubt. What then could be the cause of that slight restlessness, that gauzy change, that pensive shadow? I think that there was more love in her yet than knew how to get out of her. She would look round sometimes—it was a peculiar movement—just as if some child had been pulling at her skirts. She had lost a child, but I do not think that was the cause. And however this may be, I do believe that nothing but the love of God will satisfy the power of love in any woman's bosom. But did not Rebecca—they loved their old Jewish names, that family—did not Rebecca Morgenstern love God? Truly I think she did—but not enough to satisfy herself. And I venture to say more: I do not believe she could love him to the degree necessary for her own peace till she recognized the humanity in him. But she was more under the influences emanating from that story of the humanity of God than she knew herself. At all events she was a most human and lovely lady, full of grace and truth, like Mary before she was a Christian; and it took a good while, namely all her son's life and longer, to make her one. Rebecca Morgenstern never became a Christian. But she loved children, whether they were Christians or not. And she loved the poor, whether they were Christians or not; and, like Dorcas, made and caused to be made coats and garments for them. And, for my part, I know, if I had the choice, whether I would appear before the Master in the train of the *unbelieving* Mrs. Morgenstern or that of the *believing* Mrs. Worboise. And as to self-righteousness, I think there is far less of that among those who regard the works of righteousness as the means of salvation, than among those by whom faith itself is degraded into a work of merit—a condition by fulfilling which they become fit for God's mercy; for such is the trick which the old Adam and the Enemy together are ready enough to play the most orthodox, in despite of the purity of their creed.

CHAPTER XIII.

MATTIE'S MICROCOSM.

ALTHOUGH Mrs. Boxall, senior, was still far from well, yet when the morning of Mrs. Morgenstern's gathering dawned, lovely even in the midst of London, and the first sun-rays, with green tinges and rosy odors hanging about their golden edges, stole into her room, reminding her of the old paddock and the feeding cows at Bucks Horton, in Buckingham, she resolved that Lucy should go to Mrs. Morgenstern's. So the good old lady set herself to feel better, in order that she might be better, and by the time Lucy, who had slept in the same room with her grandmother since her illness, awoke, she was prepared to persuade her that she was quite well enough to let her have a holiday.

"But how am I to leave you, grannie, all alone?" objected Lucy.

"Oh! I dare say that queer little Mattie of yours will come in and keep me company. Make haste and get your clothes on and go and see."

Now Lucy had had hopes of inducing Mattie to go with her, as I indicated in a previous chap-

ter; but she could not press the child after the reason she gave for not going. And now she might as well ask her to stay with her grandmother. So she went round the corner to Mr. Kitley's shop, glancing up at Mr. Spelt's nest in the wall as she passed, to see whether she was not there.

When she entered the wilderness of books she saw no one; but peeping round one of the many screens, she spied Mattie sitting with her back toward her and her head bent downward. Looking over her shoulder, she saw that she had a large folding plate of the funeral of Lord Nelson open before her, the black shapes of which, with their infernal horror of plumes—the hateful flowers that the buried seeds of ancient paganism still shoot up into the pleasant Christian fields—she was studying with an unaccountable absorption of interest.

"What have you got there, Mattie?" asked Lucy.

"Well, I don't ezactly know, miss," answered the child, looking up, very white-faced and serious.

"Put the book away and come and see grannie. She wants you to take care of her to-day, while I go out."

"Well, miss, I would with pleasure; but you see father is gone out, and has left me to take care of the shop till he comes back."

"But he won't be gone a great while, will he?"

"No, miss. He knows I don't like to be left too long with the books. He'll be back before St. Jacob's strikes nine—that I know."

"Well, then, I'll go and get grannie made comfortable; and if you don't come to me by half past nine, I'll come after you again."

"Do, miss, if you please; for if father ain't come by that time—my poor head—"

"You must put that ugly book away," said Lucy, "and take a better one."

"Well, miss, I know I oughtn't to have taken this book, for there's no summer in it; and it talks like the wind at night."

"Why did you take it then?"

"Because Syne told me to take it. But that's just why I oughtn't to ha' taken it."

And she rose and put the book in one of the shelves over her head, moving her stool when she had done so, and turning her face toward the spot where the book now stood. Lucy watched her uneasily.

"What do you mean by saying that Syne told you?" she asked. "Who is Syne?"

"Don't you know Syne, miss? Syne is—you know 'Lord Syne was a miserly churl—don't you?"

Then before Lucy could reply, she looked up in her face, with a smile hovering about the one side of her mouth, and said—

"But it's all nonsense, miss, when you're standing there. There isn't no such person as Syne, when you're there. I don't believe there is any such person. But," she added with a sigh, "when you're gone away—I don't know. But I think he's up stairs in the nursery now," she said, putting her hand to her big forehead. "No, no, there's no such person."

And Mattie tried to laugh outright, but failed in the attempt, and the tears rose in her eyes.

"You've got a headache, dear," said Lucy.

"Well, no," answered Mattie. "I can not say that I have just a headache, you know. But it does buzz a little.—I hope Mr. Kitley won't be long now."

"I don't like leaving you, Mattie; but I must go to my grandmother," said Lucy, with reluctance.

"Never mind me, miss. I'm used to it. I used to be afraid of Lord Syne, for he watched me, ready to pounce out upon me with all his men at his back, and he laughed so loud to see me run. But I know better now. I never run from him now. I always frown at him, and take my own time, and do as I like. I don't want him to see that I'm afraid, you know. And I do think I have taught him a lesson. Besides, if he's very troublesome, you know, miss, I can run to Mr. Spelt. But I never talk to him about Syne, because when I do he always looks so mournful. Perhaps he thinks it is wicked. He is so good himself, he has no idea how wicked a body can be."

Lucy thought it best to hurry away, that she might return the sooner; for she could not bear the child to be left alone in such a mood. And she was sure that the best thing for her would be to spend the day with her cheery old grandmother. But as she was leaving the shop, Mr. Kitley came in, his large, bold, sharp face fresh as a north wind without a touch of east in it. Lucy preferred her request about Mattie, and he granted it cordially.

"I'm afraid, Mr. Kitley," said Lucy, "the darling is not well. She has such strange fancies."

"Oh, I don't know," returned the bookseller, with mingled concern at the suggestion and refusal to entertain it. "She's always been a curious child. Her mother was like that, you see, and she takes after her. Perhaps she does want a little more change. I don't think she's been out of this street now all her life. But she'll shake it off as she gets older, I have no doubt."

So saying, he turned into his shop, and Lucy went home. In half an hour she went back for Mattie, and leaving the two together, of whom the child, in all her words and ways, seemed the older, set out for the West End, where Mrs. Morgenstern was anxiously hoping for her appearance, seeing she depended much upon her assistance in the treat she was giving to certain poor people of her acquaintance. By any person but Mattie, Mrs. Morgenstern would have been supposed to be literally fulfilling the will of our Lord in asking only those who could not return her invitation.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE JEWESS AND HER NEIGHBORS.

MRS. MORGENSTERN looked splendid as she moved about among the hot-house plants, arranging them in the hall, on the stairs, and in the drawing-rooms. She judged, and judged rightly, that one ought to be more anxious to show honor to poor neighbors by putting on her best attire, than to ordinary guests of her own rank. Therefore, although it was the morning, she had put on a dress of green silk, trimmed with brown silk and rows of garnet buttons, which set off her dark

complexion and her rich black hair, plainly braided down her face, and loosely gathered behind. She was half a head taller than Lucy, who was by no means short. The two formed a beautiful contrast. Lucy was dark-haired and dark-eyed as well as Mrs. Morgenstern, but had a smaller face and features, regular to a rare degree. Her high close-fitting dress of black silk, with a plain linen collar and cuffs, left her loveliness all to itself. Lucy was neither strikingly beautiful nor remarkably intellectual: when one came to understand what it was that attracted him so much, he found that it was the wonderful harmony in her. As Wordsworth prophesied for his Lucy that "beauty born of murmuring sound 'should' pass into her face," so it seemed as if the harmonies which flowed from her father's fingers had moulded her form and face, her motions and thoughts, after their own fashion, even to a harmony which soothed before one knew that he was receiving it, and when he had discovered its source, made him ready to quote the words of Sir Philip Sidney—

Just accord all music make:
In thee just accord excellest,
Where each part in such peace dwelleth,
Each of other beauty takes.

I have often wondered how it was that Lucy was capable of so much; how it was, for instance, that, in the dispensing of Mrs. Morgenstern's bounty, she dared to make her way into places where no one but herself thought it could be safe for her to go, but where not even a ride word was ever directed against her or used with regard to her. If she had been as religious as she afterward became, I should not have wondered thus; for some who do not believe that God is anywhere in these dens of what looks to them all misery, will dare every thing to rescue their fellow-creatures from impending fate. But Lucy had no theories to spur or to support her. She never taught them any religion: she was only, without knowing it, a religion to their eyes. I conclude, therefore, that at this time it was just the harmony of which I have spoken that led her, protected her, and, combined with a dim consciousness that she must be doing right in following out the loving impulses of her nature, supported her in the disagreeable circumstances into which she was sometimes brought.

While they were thus busy with the flowers, Miriam joined them. She had cast her neutral tints, and appeared in a frock of dark red, with a band of gold in her dusky hair, sombrely rich. She was a strange-looking child, one of those whose coming beauty promises all the more that it has as yet reached only the stage of interesting ugliness. Splendid eyes, olive complexion, rounded cheeks, were accompanied by a very unfinished nose, and a large mouth, with thick though finely-modeled lips. She would be a glory some day. She flitted into the room, and flew from flower to flower like one of those black and red butterflies that Scotch children call witches. The sight of her brought to Lucy's mind by contrast the pale face and troubled brow of Mattie, and she told Mrs. Morgenstern about her endeavor to persuade the child to come, and how and why she had failed. Mrs. Morgenstern did not laugh much at the story, but she very nearly did something else.

"Oh! do go and bring little Mattie," said Miriam. "I will be very kind to her. I will give her my doll's house; for I shall be too big for it next year."

"But I left her taking care of my grandmother," said Lucy, to the truth of whose character it belonged to make no concealment of the simplicity of the household conditions of herself and her grandmother. "And," she added, "if she were to come I must stay, and she could not come without me."

"But I'll tell you what—couldn't you bring the other—the little Poppie she talks about? I should like to show Mattie that we're not quite so bad as she thinks us. Do you know this Poppie?" said Mrs. Morgenstern.

Then Lucy told her what she knew about Poppie. She had been making inquiries in the neighborhood, and though she had not traced the child to head-quarters anywhere, every body in the poor places in which she had sought information knew something about her, though all they knew put together did not come to much. She slept at the top of a stair here, in the bottom of a cupboard there, coiling herself up in spaces of incredible smallness; but no one could say where her home was, or indeed if she had any home. Nor, if she wanted to find her, was it of much consequence whether she knew her home or not, for that would certainly be the last place where Poppie would be found.

"But," she concluded, "if you would really like to have her, I will go and try if I can find her. I could be back in an hour and a half or so."

"You shall have the brougham."

"No, no," interrupted Lucy. "To go in a brougham to look for Poppie would be like putting salt on a bird's tail. Besides, I should not like the probable consequences of seating her in your carriage. But I should like to see how that wild little savage would do in such a place as this."

"Oh, do go," cried Miriam, clapping her hands. "It will be *such* fun."

Lucy ran for her bonnet, with great doubts of success, yet willing to do her best to find the child. She did not know that Poppie had followed her almost to Mrs. Morgenstern's door that very morning.

Now what made Lucy sufficiently hopeful of finding Poppie to start in pursuit of her, was the fact that she had of late seen the child so often between Guild Court and a certain other court in the neighborhood of Shoreditch. But Lucy did not know that it was because she was there that Poppie was there. She had not for some time, as I have said, paid her usual visits at Mrs. Morgenstern's because of her grandmother's illness; and when she did go out she had gone only to the place I have just mentioned, where the chief part of her work among the poor lay. Poppie haunting her as she did, where Lucy was there she saw Poppie. And, indeed, if Poppie had any ties to one place more than a hundred others, that place happened to be Staines Court.

When Lucy came out of Mrs. Morgenstern's, if she had only gone the other way, she would have met Poppie coming round the next corner. After Lucy had vanished, Poppie had found a penny in the gutter, had bought a fresh roll with it and given the half of it to a child younger than

herself, whom she met at the back of the Marylebone police station, and after contemplating the neighboring church-yard through the railings while they ate their roll together, and comparing this resting-place of the dead with the grand Baker Street Cemetery, she had judged it time to scamper back to the neighborhood of Wyvil Place, that she might have a chance of seeing the beautiful lady as she came out again. As she turned the corner she saw her walking away toward the station, and after following her till she entered it, scudded off for the city, and arrived in the neighborhood of Guild Court before the third train reached Farringdon Street, to which point only was the railway then available.

Lucy walked straight to Staines Court, where she was glad of the opportunity of doing some business of loving kindness at the same time that she sought Poppie. The first house she entered was in a dreadful condition of neglect. There were hardly more balusters in the stairs than served to keep the filthy hand-rail in its place; and doubtless they would by and by follow the fate of the rest, and vanish as fire-wood. One or two of the stairs even were torn to pieces for the same purpose, and the cupboard doors of the room into which Lucy entered had vanished, with half the skirting board and some of the flooring, revealing the joists, and the ceiling of the room below. All this dilapidation did not matter much in summer weather, but how would it be in the winter—except the police condemned the building before then, and because the wretched people who lived in it could get no better, decreed that so far they should have no shelter at all? Well, when the winter came, they would just go on making larger and larger holes to let in the wind, and fight the cold by burning their protection against it.

In this room there was nobody. Something shining in a dingy snubbeam that fell upon one of the holes in the floor, caught Lucy's eye. She stooped, and putting in her hand, drew out a bottle. At the same moment she let it fall back into the hole, and started with a sense of theft.

"Don't touch Mrs. Flanagan's gin bottle, lady. She's a good 'un to swear, as you'd be frightened to hear her. She gives me the creepers sometimes, and I'm used to her. She says it's all she's got in the world, and she's ready to die for the 'ould bottle."

It was Poppie's pretty dirty face and wild black eyes that looked round the door-post.

Lucy felt considerably relieved. She replaced the bottle carefully, saying as she rose—

"I didn't mean to steal it, Poppie. I only saw it shining, and wanted to know what it was. Suppose I push it a little farther in, that the sun mayn't be able to see it."

Poppie thought this was fun, and showed her white teeth.

"But it was you I was looking for—not in that hole, you know," added Lucy, laughing.

"I think I could get into it, if I was to put my clothes off," said Poppie.

Lucy thought it would be a tight fit indeed, if her clothes made any difference.

"Will you come with me?" she said. "I want you."

"Yes, lady," answered Poppie, looking though as if she would bolt in a moment.

"Come, then," said Lucy, approaching her where she still stood in the doorway.

But before she reached her, Poppie scudded, and was at the bottom of the stair before Lucy recovered from the surprise of her sudden flight. She saw at once that it would not do to make persistent advances, or show the least desire to get a hold of her.

When she got to the last landing-place on the way down, there was Poppie's face waiting for her in the door below. Careful as one who fears to startle a half-tamed creature with wings, Lucy again approached her; but she vanished again, and she saw no more of her till she was at the mouth of the court. There was Poppie once more, to vanish yet again. In some unaccountable way she seemed to divine where Lucy was going, and with endless evanishments still reappeared in front of her, till she reached the railway station. And there was no Poppie.

For a moment Lucy was dreadfully disappointed. She had not yet had a chance of trying her powers of persuasion upon the child; she had not been within arm's length of her. And she stood at the station door, hot, tired, and disappointed—with all the holiday feeling gone out of her.

Poppie had left her, because she had no magic word by which to gain access to the subterranean regions of the guarded railway. She thought Lucy was going back to the great house in Wyvil Place; but whether Poppie left her to perform the same journey on foot, I do not know. She had scarcely lost sight of Lucy, however, before she caught sight of Thomas Worboise, turning the corner of a street a hundred yards off. She darted after him, and caught him by the tail of his coat. He turned on her angrily, and shook her off.

"The lady," gasped Poppie; but Thomas would not listen, and went on his way. Poppie in her turn was disappointed, and stood "like one forbid." But at that very moment her eye fell on something in the kennel. She was always finding things, though they were generally the veriest trifles. The penny of that morning was something almost awful in its importance. This time it was a bit of red glass. Now Poppie had quite as much delight in colored glass as Lord Bacon had, who advised that hedges in great gardens should be adorned on the top here and there "with broad plates of round colored glass gilt, for the sun to play upon," only as she had less of the ways and means of procuring what she valued, she valued what she could lay her hands upon so much the more. She darted at the red shine, wiped it on her frock, sucked it clean in her mouth, as clean as her bright ivories, and polished it up with her hands, sending all the time, in the hope that Lucy might be at the station still. Poppie did not seek to analyze her feelings in doing as she did; but what she wanted was to give Lucy her treasure trove. She never doubted that what was valuable to her would be valuable to a beautiful lady. As little did she imagine how much value, as the gift of a ragged little personage like herself, that which was all but worthless would acquire in the eyes of a lady beautiful as Lucy was beautiful with the beauty of a tender human heart.

Lucy was sitting in the open waiting-room,

so weary and disappointed that little would have made her cry. She had let one train go on the vague chance that the erratic little maiden might yet show herself, but her last hope was almost gone when, to her great delight, once more she spied the odd creature peeping round the side of the door. She had presence of mind enough not to rise, lest she should startle the human lapwing, and made her a sign instead to come to her. This being just what Poppie wished at the moment, she obeyed. She darted up to Lucy, put the piece of red glass into her hand, and would have been off again like a low-flying swallow, had not Lucy caught her by the arm. Once caught, Poppie never attempted to struggle. On this occasion she only showed her teeth in a rather constrained smile, and stood still. Lucy, however, did not take her hand from her arm, for she felt that the little phenomenon would disappear at once if she did.

"Poppie," she said, "I want you to come with me."

Poppie only grinned again. So Lucy rose, still holding her by the arm, and went to the ticket-window and got two second class tickets. Poppie went on grinning, and accompanied her down the stairs without one obstructive motion.

When they were fairly seated in the carriage, and there was no longer any danger of her prisoner attempting to escape, Lucy thought of the something Poppie had given her, at which she had not even looked, so anxious was she to secure her bird. When she saw it, she comprehended it at once—the sign of love, the appeal of a half-savage sister to one of her own kind, in whom she dimly recognized her far-off ideal, even then not seeking love from the higher, only tendering the richest human gift, simple love, unsought, unbought. Thus a fragment dropped by some glazier as he went to mend the glass door leading into a garden, and picked out of the gutter by a beggar girl, who had never yet thought whether she had had a father or a mother, became in that same girl's hands a something which the Lord himself, however some of his interpreters might be shocked at the statement, would have recognized as partaking of the character of his own eucharist. And as such, though without thinking of it after that fashion, it was received by the beautiful lady. The tears came into her eyes. Poppie thought she had offended or disappointed her, and looked very grave. Lucy saw she had misunderstood her. There was no one in the carriage with them. She stooped and kissed her. Then the same tears came, almost for the first time since she had been an infant, into Poppie's eyes. But just then the train moved off, and although the child by no remark and no motion evinced astonishment any more than fear, she watched every thing with the intensity of an animal which in new circumstances can not afford to lose one moment of circumspection, seeing a true knowledge of the whole may be indispensable to the retention of its liberty; and before they reached King's Cross, her eyes were clear, and only a channel on each cheek ending in a little mud bank, showed that just two tears had flowed half way down her cheeks and dried there undisturbed in the absorption of her interest.

Before they reached Baker Street station, Lucy had begun to be anxious as to how she should

get her charge through the streets. But no sooner were they upon the stairs, than Lucy perceived by the way in which Poppie walked, and the way in which she now and then looked up at her, that there was no longer any likelihood that she would run away from her. When they reached the top, she took her by the hand, and without showing the slightest inclination to bolt, Poppie trotted alongside of her to Mrs. Morgenstern's door. Having gained her purpose, Lucy's weariness had quite left her, and her eyes shone with triumph. They made a strange couple, that graceful lady and that ragged bizarre child, who would, however, have shown herself lovely to any eyes keen enough to see through the dirt which came and went according to laws as unknown to Poppie as if it had been a London fog.

Lucy knocked at the door. It was opened by a huge porter in a rich livery, and shoulder-knots like the cords of a coffin, as if he were about to be lowered into his grave standing. He started at sight of the little city Bedouin, but stood aside to let them enter, with all the respect which, like the rest of his class, he ever condescended to show to those who, like Miss Burton, came to instruct Miss Morgenstern, and gave him, so much their superior, the trouble of opening the door to them. The pride of the proudest nobleman or parvenu-millionaire is entirely east in the shade by the pride of his servants, justifying the representation of Spenser, that although Orgoglio is the son of Terra by Æolus, he can not be raised to his full giantship without the aid of his foster-father Ignaro. Lucy, however, cared as little for this form of contempt as imperious little Poppie by her side, who trotted as unconcerned over the black and white lozenges of the marble floor as over the ordinary slabs of Guild Court, or the round stones of Staines Court, and looked up the splendid stair-case which rose from the middle of the round hall till it reached its side, and then branched into two that ran circling and ascending the wall to the floor above, its hand-rails and balusters shining with gold, and its steps covered with a carpet two yards wide, in which the foot sank as if in grass, with as much indifference as if it were the break-neck stair-case I have already described as leading to the abode of Mistress Flanagan. But her little bare feet were not destined to press such a luxurious support; better things awaited them, namely, the grass itself; for the resplendent creature whose head and legs were equally indebted to the skill of the cunning workman, strode on before them, and through a glass door at the back, to a lawn behind, such as few London dwellings have to show. They might have thought that they had been transported by enchantment to some country palace, so skillfully were the neighboring houses hidden by the trees that encircled the garden. Mrs. Morgenstern, with a little company of her friends, was standing in the middle of the lawn, while many of her poorer neighbors were wandering about the place enjoying the flowers, and what to them was indeed fresh air, when Lucy came out with the dirty bare-legged child in her hand. All eyes turned upon her, and a lovelier girl doing lovelier deed would have taken more than that summer morning to discover.

But Lucy had the bit of red glass in her mind, and, without heeding hostess or friends for the

moment, led Poppie straight toward a lovely rose-tree that stood in full blossom on one side of the lawn. How cool that kindly humble grass must have felt to the hot feet of the darling, but she had no time to think about it. For as she drew near the rose-tree, her gaze became more and more fixed upon it, and when at length she stood before it, and beheld it in all its glory, she burst into a very passion of weeping. The eyes of the daughter of man became rivers and her head a fountain of waters, filled and glorified by the presence of a rose-tree. All that were near gathered about, till Lucy, Poppie, and the rose-tree were the centre of a group. Lucy made no attempt to stay the flow of Poppie's tears, for her own heart swelled and swelled at the sight of the child's feelings. Surely it was the presence of God that so moved her: if ever bush burned with fire and was not consumed, that rose-bush burned with the presence of God. Poppie had no handkerchief; nor was there continuity of space enough in her garments to hold a pocket: she generally carried things in her mouth when they were small enough to go in. And she did not even put her hands to her face to hide her emotion. She let her tears run down her stained cheeks, and let sob follow sob unchecked, gazing ever through the storm of her little world at the marvel in front of her. She had seen a rose before, but had never seen a rose-tree full of roses. At last Lucy drew her handkerchief from her pocket, and for the first time in her life Poppie had tears wiped from her face by a loving hand.

There was one man, and only one in the company—Mr. Sargent, a young barrister. He was the first to speak. He drew near to Lucy and said, in a half whisper—

“Where did you find the little creature, Miss Burton?”

“That would be hard to say,” answered Lucy, with a smile. “Isn't she a darling?”

“You are a darling, anyhow,” said Mr Sargent, but neither to Lucy nor to any one but himself. He had been like one of the family for many years, for his father and Mr. Morgenstern had been intimate, and he had admired Lucy ever since she went first to the house; but he had never seen her look so lovely as she looked that morning.

Certain harmonious circumstances are always necessary to bring out the peculiar beauty both of persons and things—a truth recognized by Emerson in his lovely poem called “Each and All,” but recognized imperfectly, inasmuch as he seems to represent the beauty of each as dependent on the all not merely for its full manifestation, but for its actual being; a truth likewise recognized by Shakspeare, but by him with absolute truth of vision—

The nightingale, if she should sing by day,
When every goose is cackling, would be thought
No better a musician than the wren.
*How many things by season seasoned are
To their right praise and true perfection!*

It was to the praise of Lucy's beauty that in this group she should thus look more beautiful. The rose-tree and the splendor of Mrs. Morgenstern did not eclipse her, because her beauty was of another sort which made a lovely harmony of difference with theirs. Or perhaps, after all, it was the ragged child in her hand that gave a tender glow to her presence unseen before.

Little Miriam pulled at her mamma's skirt. She stooped to the child.

"Somebody has lost that one," said Miriam, pointing shyly to Poppie. "She looks like it."

"Perhaps," said her mother. But the answer did not satisfy Miriam.

"You told me you had lost a little girl once," she said.

Mrs. Morgenstern had never yet uttered the word *death* in her hearing. As to the little dead daughter, she had to the sister said only that she had lost her. Miriam had to interpret the phrase for herself.

"Yes, dear child," answered her mother, not yet seeing what she was driving at.

"Don't you think, mamma," pursued Miriam, with the tears rising in her great black eyes, "that that's her? I do. I am sure it is my little sister."

Mrs. Morgenstern had the tenderest memories of her lost darling, and turned away to hide her feelings. Meantime a little conversation had arisen in the group. Lucy had let go her hold of Poppie, whose tears had now ceased. Miriam drew near shyly, and possessed herself of the hand of the vagrant. Her mother turned and saw her, and motherhood spoke aloud in her heart. How did it manifest itself? In drawing her child away from the dirt that divided their hands? That might have proved her a dam, but would have gone far to disprove her motherhood.

"What shall we do with her, Miriam?" she said.

"Ask nurse to wash her in the bath, and put one of my frocks on her."

Poppie snatched her hand from Miriam's, and began to look about her with wild-eyed search after a hole to run into. Mrs. Morgenstern saw that she was frightened, and turned away to Lucy, who was on the other side of the rose-tree, talking to Mr. Sargent.

"Couldn't we do something to make the child tidy, Lucy?" she said.

Lucy gave her shoulders a little shrug, as much as to say she feared it would not be of much use. She was wrong there, for if the child should never be clean again in her life, no one could tell how the growth of moral feeling might be aided in her by her once knowing what it was to have a clean skin and clean garments. It might serve hereafter, in her consciousness, as a type of something better still than personal cleanliness, might work in aid of her consciousness as a vague reminder of ideal purity—not altogether pleasant to her ignorant fancy, and yet to be—faintly and fearfully—desired. But although Lucy did not see much use in washing her, she could not help wondering what she would look like if she were clean. And she proceeded to carry out her friend's wishes.

Poppie was getting bored already with the unrealized world of grandeur around her. The magic of the roses was all gone, and she was only looking out for a chance of sending. Yet when Lucy spoke to her she willingly yielded her hand, perhaps in the hope that she was, like Peter's angel, about to open the prison-doors and lead her out of her prison.

Lucy gave an amusing account of how Poppie looked askance, with a mingling of terror and repugnance, at the great bath half full of water, into which she was about to be plunged. But the

door was shut, and there was not even a chimney for her to run up, and she submitted. She looked even pleased when she was at length in the midst of the water. But Lucy found that she had undertaken a far more difficult task than she had expected—especially when she came to her hair. It was nearly two hours, notwithstanding repeated messages from Mrs. Morgenstern and tappings at the door of the bath-room by Miriam, before she was able to reproduce the little savage on whom she had been bestowing this baptism of love.

When she came down at last, the company, consisting of some of Mrs. Morgenstern's more intimate friends, and a goodly number of *clients* if not exactly dependents, was seated at luncheon in the large dining-room. Poppie attracted all eyes once more. She was dressed in a last year's summer frock of Miriam's, and her hair was reduced to order; but she had begun to cry so piteously when Lucy began to put stockings upon her, that she gave it up at once, and her legs were still bare. I presume she saw the last remnants of her freedom vanishing in those gyves and fetters. But nice and clean as she looked, she certainly had lost something by her decent garments. Poppie must have been made for rags and rags for Poppie—they went so admirably together. And there is nothing wicked in rags or in poverty. It is possible to go in rags and keep the Ten Commandments, and it is possible to ride in purple and fine linen and break every one of them. Nothing, however, could spoil the wildness of those honestly furtive eyes.

Seated beside Lucy at the table, she did nothing but first stare, then dart her eyes from one to another of the company with the seared expression of a creature caught in a trap, and then stare again. She was evidently any thing but comfortable. When Lucy spoke to her she did not reply, but gazed appealingly, and on the point of crying, into her eyes, as if to say, "What *have* I done to be punished in this dreadful manner?" Lucy tried hard to make her eat, but she sat and stared and would touch nothing. Her plate, with the wing of a chicken on it, stood before her unregarded. But all at once she darted out her hand like the paw of a wild beast, caught something, slipped from her chair, and disappeared under the table. Peeping down after her, Lucy saw her seated on the floor, devouring the roll which had been put by the side of her plate. Judging it best not to disturb her, she took no more notice of her for some time, during which Poppie, having discovered a long row of resplendent buttons down the front of her dress, twisted them all off with a purpose manifested as soon as the luncheon was over. When the company rose from their seats, she crawled out from under the table and ran to Miriam, holding out both her hands. Miriam held out her hands to meet Poppie's, and received them full of the buttons off her own old frock.

"Oh! you naughty Poppie," said Lucy, who had watched her. "Why did you cut off the buttons? Don't you like them?"

"Oh! golly! don't I just? And so does *she*. Tuck me up if she don't!"

Poppie had no idea that she had done any thing improper. It was not as buttons, but *per se*, as pretty things, that she admired the knobs, and

therefore she gave them to Miriam. Having said thus, she caught at another *tommy*, as she would have called it, dived under the table again, and devoured it at her ease, keeping, however, a sharp eye upon her opportunity. Finding one, when Lucy, who had remained in the room to look after her, was paying more attention to the party in the garden, she crawled out at the door, left open during the process of *taking away*, and with her hand on the ponderous lock of the street door, found herself seized from behind by the porter. She had been too long a pupil of the London streets not to know the real position of the liveried in the social scale, and for them she had as little respect as any of her tribe. She therefore assailed him with such a torrent of bad language, scarcely understanding a word that she used, that he declared it made his "air stand on end," although he was tolerably familiar with such at the Spotted Dog round the corner. Finding, however, that this discharge of Cuttle-fish ink had no effect upon the enemy, she tried another mode—and with a yell of pain, the man fell back, shaking his hand, which bore the marks of four sharp incisors. In one moment Poppie was free, and scudding. Thus ended her introduction to civilized life.

Poppie did not find it nice. She preferred all London to the biggest house and garden in it. True, there was that marvelous rose-tree. But free-born creatures can not live upon the contemplation of roses. After all, the thing she had been brought up to—the streets, the kennels with their occasional crusts, pennies, and bits of glass, the holes to creep into, and the endless room for scudding—was better. And her unsuitable dress, which did attract the eyes of the passers—being such as was seldom seen in connection with bare hair and legs—would soon accommodate itself to circumstances, taking the form of rags before a week was over, to which change of condition no care of Poppie's would interpose an obstacle. For like the birds of the air and the lilies of the field, she had no care. She did not know what it meant. And possibly the great One who made her may have different ideas about respectability from those of dining aldermen and members of Parliament from certain boroughs that might be named.

At the porter's cry Lucy started, and found to her dismay that her charge was gone. She could not, however, help a certain somewhat malicious pleasure at the man's discomfiture, and the baby-like way in which he lamented over his bitten hand. He forgot himself so far as to call her "the little devil"—which was quite in accordance with his respectable way of thinking. But both Mrs. Morgenstern and Lucy, after the first disappointment and vexation were over, laughed heartily at the affair, and even Miriam was worked up to a smile at last. But she continued very mournful, notwithstanding, over the loss of her sister, as she would call her.

Mr. Sargent did his best to enliven the party. He was a man of good feeling, and of more than ordinary love for the right. This, however, from a dread of what he would have called *sentimentality*, he persisted in regarding as a mere peculiarity, possibly a weakness. If he made up his mind to help any one who was wronged, for which it must be confessed he had more time than he would have cared to acknowledge,

he would say that he had "taken an *interest* in such or such a case;" or that the case involved "points of *interest*," which he was "willing to see settled." He never said that he wanted to see right done: that would have been enthusiastic, and unworthy of the cold dignity of a lawyer. So he was one of those false men, alas too few! who always represent themselves as inferior to what they are. Many and various were the jokes he made upon Poppie and Jeames, ever, it must be confessed, with an eye to the approbation of Miss Burton. He declared, for instance, that the Armageddon of class-legislation would be fought between those of whom the porter and Poppie were the representatives, and rejoiced that, as in the case of the small quarrel between Fitz James and Roderick Dhu, Poppie had drawn the first blood, and gained thereby a good omen. And Lucy was pleased with him, it must be confessed. She never thought of comparing him with Thomas, which was well for Thomas. But she did think he was a very clever, gentlemanly fellow, and knew how to make himself agreeable.

He offered to see her home, which she declined, not even permitting him to walk with her to the railway.

CHAPTER XV.

THE TWO OLD WOMEN.

SURE found the two old women, of whom Mattie still seemed the older, seated together at their tea. Not a ray of the afternoon sun could find its way into the room. It was dusky and sultry, with a smell of roses. This, and its strange mingling of furniture, made it like a room over a broker's in some country town.

"Well, Miss Burton, here you are at last!" said Mattie, with a half smile on the half of her mouth.

"Yes, Mattie, here I am. Has grandmother been good to you?"

"Of course she has—very good. Every body is good to *me*. I am a very fortunate child, as my father says, though he never seems to mean it."

"And how do you think your patient is?" asked Lucy, while Mrs. Boxall sat silent, careful not to obstruct the amusement which the child's answers must give them.

"Well, I do not think Mrs. Boxall is worse. She has been very good, and has done every thing I found myself obliged to recommend. I would not let her get up so soon as she wanted to."

"And what did you do to keep her in bed?" asked Lucy.

"Well, I could not think of a story to tell her just then, so I got the big Bible out of the book-case, and began to show her the pictures. But she did not care about that. I think it was my fault though, because I was not able to hold the book so that she could see them properly. So I read a story to her, but I do not think I chose a very nice one."

Mrs. Boxall made a deprecating motion with her head and hands, accompanied by the words—

"She *will* say what she thinks—Bible or Prayer-book."

"Well, and where's the harm, when I mean

none? Who's to be angry at that? *I will* say," Mattie went on, "that it was an ugly trick of that woman to serve a person that never did *her* any harm; and I wonder at two sensible women like Mrs. Boxall and Deborah sticking up for her."

"Is it Jael she means, grannie?" asked Lucy, very softly.

"Yes, it is Jael she means," answered Mattie for herself, with some defiance in her tone.

"For my part," she continued, "I think it was just like one of Synce's tricks."

"Have you seen Mr. Spelt to-day, Mattie?" asked Lucy, desirous of changing the subject, because of the direction the child's thoughts had taken.

"Well, I haven't," answered Mattie, "and I will go and see now whether he's gone or not. But don't you fancy that I don't see through it for all that, Miss Burton," she continued. "I shouldn't have been in the way, though—not much, for I like to see young people enjoying themselves."

"What *do* you mean, Mattie?" asked Lucy with a bewilderment occasioned rather by the quarter whence the words proceeded than by the words themselves; for she did expect to see Thomas that evening.

Mattie vouchsafed no reply to the question, but bade them good-night, the one and the other, with an evident expression of *humeur*, and marched solemnly down the stairs, holding carefully by the balusters, for she was too small to use the hand-rail comfortably.

Mr. Spelt's roost was shut up for the night: he had gone to take some work home. Mattie therefore turned toward her father's shop.

In the archway she ran against Thomas, or more properly, Thomas ran against her, for Mattie never ran at all, so that he had to clasp her to prevent her from falling.

"Well, you needn't be in such a hurry, Mr. Thomas, though she is a-waiting for you. She went go till you come, *I* know."

"You're a cheeky little monkey," said Thomas good naturedly. But the words were altogether out of tune with the idea of Mattie, who again felt her dignity invaded, and walked into the shop with her chin projecting more than usual.

"Come, my princess," said her father, seating himself in an old chair, and taking the child on his knee. "I haven't seen my princess all day. How's your royal highness this night?"

Mattie laid her head on his shoulder, and burst into tears.

"What's the matter with my pet?" said her father, fondling and soothing her with much concern. "Has any body been unkind to you?"

"No, Mr. Kately," said the child; "but I feel that lonely! I wish you would read to me a bit, for Mr. Spelt ain't there, and I read something in the Bible this morning that ain't done me no good."

"You shouldn't read such things, Mattie," said the bookseller. "They ain't no good. I'll go and get a candle. Sit you there till I come back."

"No, no, father. Don't leave me here. I don't like the books to-night. Take me with you. Carry me."

The father obeyed at once, took his child on his arm, got a candle from the back room, for the place was very dusky—he did not care to

light the gas this time of the year—and sat down with Mattie in a part of the shop which was screened from the door, where he could yet hear every footstep that passed.

"What shall I read now, my precious?" he asked.

"Well, I don't think I care for any thing but the New Testament to-night, father."

"Why, you've just been saying it disagreed with you this very morning," objected Mr. Kately.

"No, father, It wasn't the New Testament at all. It was the very old Testament, I believe: for it was near the beginning of it, and told all about a horrid murder. I do believe," she added, reflectively, "that that book grows better as it gets older—younger, I mean."

The poor child wanted some one to help her out of her Bible difficulties, and her father certainly was not the man to do so, for he believed nothing about or in it. Like many other children far more carefully taught of man, she was laboring under the misery of the fancy that every thing related in the Old Testament without remark of disapprobation is sanctioned by the divine will. If parents do not encourage their children to speak their minds about what they read generally, and especially in the Bible, they will one day be dismayed to find that they have not merely the strangest but the most deadly notions of what is contained in that book—as, for instance, besides the one in hand, that God approved of all the sly tricks of Jacob—for was not he the religious one of the brothers, and did not all his tricks succeed? They are not able without help to regard the history broadly, and see that just because of this bad that was in him, he had to pass through a life of varied and severe suffering, punished in the vices which his children inherited from himself, in order that the noble part of his nature might be burned clean of the filth that clung to it.

Such was Mr. Kately's tenderness over his daughter, increased by some signs he had begun to see of the return of an affection of the brain from which he had been on the point of losing her some years before, that he made no farther opposition, but rising again, brought an old "breeches Bible" from a shelf, and taking her once more on his knee, supported her with one hand and held the book with the other.

"Well, I don't know one chapter from another," reflected Mr. Kately aloud. "I wonder where the child would like me to read. I'm sure I can't tell what to read."

"Read about *Somebody*," said Mattie.

From the peculiar expression she gave to the word, her father guessed at her meaning, and opening the gospel part of the book at random, began to read.

He read, from the Gospel by St. Matthew, the story of the Transfiguration, to which Mattie listened without word or motion. He then went on to the following story of the lunatic and apparently epileptic boy. As soon as he began to read the account of how the child was vexed, Mattie said conclusively—

"That was Synce. I know him. He's been at it for a long time."

"And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour," the bookseller went on reading

in a subdued voice, partly because he sat in his shop with the door open, partly because not even he could read "the ancient story, ever new" without feeling a something he could not have quite accounted for if he had thought of trying. But the moment he had read those words, Mattie cried—

"There, I knew it!"

It must be remembered that Mattie had not read much of the New Testament. Mr. Spelt alone had led her to read any. Every thing came new to her, therefore; every word was like the rod of Moses that drew the waters of response.

"What did you know, princess?" asked her father.

"I knew that Somebody would make him mind what he was about—I did. I wonder if he let a flash of that light out on him that he shut up inside him again. I shouldn't wonder if that was it. I know Syne couldn't stand that—no, not for a moment.—I think I'll go to bed, Mr. Kitley."

CHAPTER XVI.

ON THE RIVER.

NOTWITHSTANDING the good-humored answer Thomas had made to Mattie, her words stuck to him and occasioned him a little discomfort. For if the bookseller's daughter, whose shop lay between the counting-house and the court, knew so well of his visits to Lucy, how could he hope that they would long remain concealed from other and far more dangerous eyes. This thought oppressed him so much, that instead of paying his usual visit to Mr. Molken, he went to Mrs. Boxall's at once. There, after greetings, he threw himself on the cushions of the old settle, and was gloomy. Lucy looked at him with some concern. Mrs. Boxall murmured something about his being in the doldrums, a phrase she had learned from her son John.

"Let's go out, Lucy," said Thomas; "it is so sultry."

Lucy was quite ready in herself to comply. For one reason, she had something upon her mind about which she wanted to talk to him. But she objected.

"My grandmother is not fit to be left alone, Thomas," she said, regretfully.

"Oh! ah!" said Thomas.

"Never mind me, child," interposed the old woman. "You'll make me wish myself in my grave, if you make me come between young people. You go, my dear, and never mind me. You needn't be gone a great while, you know."

"Oh, no, grannie; I'll be back in an hour, or less, if you like," said Lucy, hastening to put on her bonnet.

"No, no, my dear. An hour's in reason. Any thing in reason, you know."

So Lucy made the old lady comfortable in her arm-chair, and went out with Thomas.

The roar of the city had relaxed. There would be no more blocks in Gracechurch Street that night. There was little smoke in the air, only enough to clothe the dome of St. Paul's in a faintly rosy garment, tinged from the west, where the sun was under a cloud. The huge mass looked ethereal, melted away as to a shell

of thicker air against a background of slate-color, where a wind was gathering to flow at sunset through the streets and lanes, cooling them from the heat of the day, of the friction of iron and granite, of human effort, and the thousand fires that prepared the food of the city-dining population. Crossing the chief thoroughfares, they went down the lanes leading to the river. Here they passed through a sultry region of aromatic fragrance, where the very hooks that hung from cranes in door-ways high above the ground, seemed to retain something of the odor of the bales they had lifted from the wagons below during the hot sunshine that drew out their imprisoned essences. By yet closer ways they went toward the river, descending still, and at length, by a short wooden stair, and a long wooden way, they came on a floating pier. There the wind blew sweet and cooling and very grateful, for the summer was early and fervid. Down into the east the river swept away, sombre and sullen, to gurgle blindly through the jungle of masts that lay below the bridge and crossed the horizontal lines of the sky with their delicate spars, and yet more delicate cordage. Little did Thomas think that one of those masts rose from a vessel laden, one might say, with his near, though not his final fate—a fate that truth might have averted, but which the very absence of truth made needful and salutary. A boat was just starting up the river toward the light.

"Let's have a blow," said Thomas.

"That will be delightful," answered Lucy, and they went on board. First one wheel, then the other, then both together, dashed the Stygian waters of the Thames into a white fury, and they were moving up the stream. They went forward into the bows of the boat to get clear of the smoke, and sat down. There were so few on board that they could talk without being overheard. But they sat silent for some time; the stillness of the sky seemed to have sunk into their hearts. For that was as pure over their heads as if there had been no filthy Thames beneath their feet; and its light and color illuminated the surface of the river, which was not yet so vile that it could not reflect the glory that fell upon its face. The tide was against them, and with all the struggles of the little steamer they made but slow way up the dark hurrying water. Lucy sat gazing at the banks of the river, where the mighty city on either hand has declined into sordid meanness, skeleton exposure; where the struggles of manufacture and commerce are content to abjure their own deencies for the sake of the greater gain. Save where the long line of Somerset House, and the garden of the Temple asserted the ancient dignity of order and cleanliness, the whole looked like a mean, tattered, draggled fringe upon a rich garment. Then she turned her gaze down on the river, which, as if ashamed of the condition into which it had fallen from its first estate, crawled fiercely away to hide itself in the sea.

"How different," she said, looking up at Thomas, who had been sitting gazing at her all the time that she contemplated the shore and the river—"How different things would be if they were only clean!"

"Yes, indeed," returned Thomas. "Think what it would be to see the fishes—the salmon, say—shooting about in clear water under us, like

so many silver fishes in a crystal globe! If people were as fond of the cleanliness you want as they are of money, things would look very different indeed!"

I have said that Thomas loved Lucy more and more. Partly a cause, partly a consequence of this, he had begun to find out that there was a poetic element in her, and he flattered himself that he had developed it. No doubt he had had a share in its development, but it was of a deeper, truer, simpler kind than his own, and would never have been what it was, in rapport always with the facts of nature and life, if it had been only a feminine response to his. Men like women to reflect them, no doubt; but the woman who can only reflect a man, and is nothing in herself, will never be of much service to him. The woman who can not stand alone is not likely to make either a good wife or mother. She may be a pleasant companion so far as the intercourse of love-making goes, no doubt—scarcely more; save, indeed, the trials that ensue upon marriage bring out the power latent in her. But the remark with which Thomas responded to Lucy was quite beyond his usual strain. He had a far finer nature underneath than his education had allowed to manifest itself, and the circumstances in which he was at the moment were especially favorable to his best. Casca, on his first appearance in *Julius Cæsar*, talks blunt and snarling prose: in the very next scene, which is a fearfully magnificent thunder-storm, he speaks poetry. "He was quick mettle when he went to school," and the circumstances brought it out.

"I wish the world was clean, Thomas, all through," said Lucy.

Thomas did not reply. His heart smote him. Those few words went deeper than all Mr. Simon's sermons, public and private. For a long time he had not spoken a word about religion to Lucy. Nor had what he said ever taken any hold upon her intellect, although it had upon her conscience; for, not having been brought up to his vocabulary, and what might be called the technical phrases if not *slang* of his religion, it had been to her but a vague sound, which yet she received as a reminder of duty. Some healthy religious teaching would be of the greatest value to her now. But Mr. Potter provided no food beyond the established fare; and whatever may be said about the sufficiency of the church-service, and the uselessness of preaching, I for one believe that a dumb ass, if the Lord only opens his mouth, may rebuke much madness of prophets, and priests too. But where there is neither honesty nor earnestness, as in the case of Mr. Potter, the man is too much of an ass for even the Lord to open his mouth to any useful purpose. His heart has to be opened first, and that takes time and trouble.

Finding that Thomas remained silent, Lucy looked into his face, and saw that he was troubled. This brought to the point of speech the dissatisfaction with himself which had long been moving restlessly and painfully in his heart, and of which the quiet about him, the peace of the sky, and that sense of decline and coming repose, which invades even the heart of London with the sinking sun, had made him more conscious than he had yet been.

"Oh, Lucy," he said, "I wish you would help me to be good."

To no other could he have said so. Mr. Simon, for instance, aroused all that was most contrarious in him. But Lucy at this moment seemed so near to him that before her he could be humble without humiliation, and could even enjoy the confession of weakness implied in his appeal to her for aid.

She looked at him with a wise kind of wonder in her look. For a moment she was silent.

"I do not know how I can help you, Thomas, for you know better about all such things than I do. But there is one thing I want very much to speak to you about, because it makes me unhappy—rather—not *very*, you know."

She laid her hand upon his. He looked at her lovingly. She was encouraged, and continued.

"I don't like this way of going on, Thomas. I never quite liked it, but I've been thinking more about it, lately. I thought you must know best, but I am not satisfied with myself at all about it."

"What do you mean, Lucy?" asked Thomas, his heart beginning already to harden at the approach of definite blame. It was all very well for him to speak as if he might be improved—it was another thing for Lucy to do so.

"Do not be vexed with me, Thomas. You must know what I mean.—I wish your mother knew all about it," she added, hastily, after a pause. And then her face flushed red as a sunset.

"She'll know all about it in good time," returned Thomas, testily; adding in an undertone, as if he did not mean to press the remark, although he wanted her to hear it—"You do not know my mother, or you would not be so anxious for her to know all about it."

"Couldn't you get your father to tell her then, and make it easier for you?"

"My father," answered Thomas, coolly, "would turn me out of the house if I didn't give you up; and as I don't mean to do that, and don't want to be turned out of the house just at present, when I have nowhere else to go, I don't want to tell him."

"I can't go on in this way then. Besides, they are sure to hear of it, somehow."

"Oh no, they won't. Who's to tell them?"

"Don't suppose I've been listening, Tom, because I heard your last words," said a voice behind them—that of Mr. Wither. "I haven't been watching you, but I have been watching for an opportunity of telling you that Stopper is keeping far too sharp a lookout on you to mean you any good by it.—I beg your pardon, Miss Boxall," he resumed, taking off his hat. "I fear I have been rude; but as I say, I was anxious to tell Mr. Worboise to be cautious. I don't see why a fellow should get into a scrape for want of a hint."

The manner with which Wither spoke to her made poor Lucy feel that there was not merely something unfitting, but something even disreputable, in the way her relation to Thomas was kept up. She grew as pale as death, rose and turned to the side of the vessel, and drew her veil nervously over her face.

"It's no business of mine, of course, Tom. But what I tell you is true. Though if you take my advice," said Wither, and here he dropped his voice to a whisper, "this connection is quite as fit a one to cut as the last; and the sooner you

do it the better, for it'll make a devil of a row with old Boxall. You ought to think of the girl, you know. Your own governor's your own lookout. There's none of it any business of mine, you know."

He turned with a nod and went aft; for the steamer was just drawing in to the Hungerford pier, where he had to go ashore.

For a few minutes not a word passed between Thomas and Lucy. A sudden cloud had fallen upon them. They must not go on this way, but what other way were they to take? They stood side by side, looking into the water, Thomas humiliated and Lucy disgraced. There was no comfort to be got out of that rushing blackness, and the mud-banks grew wider and wider.

Lucy was the first to speak, for she was far more capable than Tom.

"We must go ashore at the next pier," she said.

"Very well," said Tom, as if he had been stunned into sullenness. "If you want to get rid of me because of what that fellow said—"

"Oh Tom!" said Lucy, and burst out crying.

"Well, what do you want, Lucy?"

"We must part, Tom," sobbed Lucy.

"Nonsense!" said Tom, nearly crying himself, for a great painful lump had risen in his throat.

"We can love each other all the same," said Lucy, still sobbing; "only you must not come to see me any more—that is—I do not mean—never any more at all—but till you have told them—all about it. I don't mean now, but some time, you know. When will you be of age, Tom?"

"Oh, that makes no difference. As long's I'm dependent, it's all the same. I wish I was my own master. I should soon let them see I didn't care what they said."

Silence again followed, during which Lucy tried in vain to stop her tears by wiping them away. A wretched feeling awoke in her that Thomas was not manly, could not resolve—or rather, could not help her when she would do the right thing. She would have borne any thing rather than that. It put her heart in a vice.

The boat stopped at the Westminster pier. They went on shore. The sun was down, and the fresh breeze that blew, while it pleasantly cooled the hot faces that moved westward from their day's work, made Lucy almost shiver with cold. For loss had laid hold of her heart. They walked up Parliament Street. Thomas felt that he must say something, but what he should say he could not think. He always thought what he should say—never what he should do.

"Lucy, dear," he said at last, "we won't make up our minds to-night. Wait till I see you next. I shall have time to think about it before then. I will be a match for that sneaking rascal, Stopper, yet."

Lucy felt inclined to say that to sneak was no way to give sneaking its own. But she said neither that nor any thing else.

They got into an omnibus at Charing Cross, and returned—deafened, stupefied, and despondent—into the city. They parted at Lucy's door, and Thomas went home, already much later than usual.

What should he do? He resolved upon nothing, and did the worst thing he could have done. He lied.

"You are very late to-night, Thomas," said his mother. "Have you been all this time with Mr. Moloch?"

"Yes, mother," answered Thomas.

And when he was in bed he comforted himself by saying there was no such person as Mr. Moloch.

When Lucy went to bed, she prayed to God in sobs and cries of pain. Hitherto she had believed in Thomas without a question crossing the dice of her faith; but now she had begun to doubt, and the very fact that she could doubt was enough to make her miserable, even if there had been no ground for the doubt. My readers must remember that no one had attempted to let her into the secrets of his character as I have done with them. His beautiful face, pleasant manners, self-confidence, and above all, her love, had blinded her to his faults. For, although I do not in the least believe that Love is blind, yet I must confess that, like kittens and some other animals, he has his blindness nine days or more, as it may be, from his birth. But once she had begun to suspect, she found ground for suspicion enough. She had never known grief before—not even when her mother died—for death has not any thing despicable, and Thomas had.

What Charles Withler had told Thomas was true enough. Mr. Stopper was after him. Ever since that dinner-party at Mr. Boxall's he had hated him, and bided his time.

Mr. Stopper was a man of forty, in whose pineapple whiskers and bristly hair the first white streaks of autumn had begun to show themselves. He had entered the service of Messrs. Blunt & Baker some five-and-twenty years before, and had gradually risen through all the intervening positions to his present post. Within the last year, moved by prudential considerations, he had begun to regard the daughters of his principal against the background of possible marriage; and as he had hitherto from motives of the same class resisted all inclinations in that direction, with so much the more force did his nature rush into the channel which the consent of his selfishness opened for the indulgence of his affections. For the moment he saw Mary Boxall with this object in view, he fell in love with her after the fashion of such a man, beginning instantly to build, not castles, but square houses in the air, in the dining-rooms especially of which her form appeared in gorgeous and somewhat matronly garments amid ponderous mahogany, seated behind the obscuration of tropical plants at a table set out *à la Russe*. His indignation, when he entered the drawing-room after Mr. Boxall's dinner, and saw Thomas in the act of committing the indiscretion recorded in that part of my story, passed into silent hatred when he found that while his attentions were slighted, those of Thomas, in his eyes a mere upstart—for he judged every thing in relation to the horizon of Messrs. Blunt & Baker, and every man in relation to himself, seated upon the loftiest summit within the circle of that horizon—not even offered, but only dropped at her feet in passing, were yet accepted.

Among men Mr. Stopper was of the bull-dog breed, sagacious, keen-scented, vulgar, and inexorable; capable of much within the range of things illuminated by his own interests, capable of nothing beyond it. And now one of his main

objects was to catch some scent—for the bull-dog has an excellent nose—of Thomas's faults or failings, and follow such up the wind of his prosperity, till he should have a chance of pulling him down at last. His first inclination toward this revenge was strengthened and elevated into an imagined execution of justice when Mary fell ill, and it oozed out that her illness had not a little to do with some behavior of Thomas's. Hence it came that, both consciously and unconsciously, Mr. Stopper was watching the unfortunate youth, though so cautious was Thomas that he had not yet discovered any thing of which he could make a definite use. Nor did he want to interrupt Thomas's projects before he found that they put him in his power.

So here was a weak and conceited youth of fine faculties and fine impulses, the malign aspects of two opposite stars—watched, that is, and speculated upon by two able and unprincipled men; the one, Mr. Molken, searching him and ingratiating himself with him, "to the end to know how to worke him, or winde him, or governe him," which, Lord Bacon goes on to say, "proceedeth from a heart that is double and cloven, and not entyre and ingenuous;" the other, Mr. Stopper, watching his conduct, not for the sake of procuring advantage to himself, but injury to Thomas. The one sought to lead him astray, that he might rob him in the dark; the other sought a chance of knocking him down, that he might leave him lying in the ditch. And they soon began to play into each other's hands.

CHAPTER XVII.

CAPTAIN BOXALL'S PROPOSAL.

ABOUT three weeks before the occurrences last recorded, the following conversation took place between Richard and John Boxall over their wine:

"I tell you what, brother," said the captain, "you're addling good brains with overwork. You won't make half so much money if you're too greedy after it. You don't look the same fellow you used to."

"I hope I'm not too greedy after money, John. But it's my business, as yours is to sail your ship."

"Yes, yes. I can't sail my ship too well, nor you attend to your business too well. But if I was to sail two ships instead of one, or if I was to be on deck instead of down at my dinner when she was going before the wind in the middle of the Atlantic, I shouldn't do my best when it came on to blow hard in the night."

"That's all very true. But I don't think it applies to me. I never miss my dinner by any chance."

"Don't you turn your blind eye on my signal, Dick. You know what I mean well enough.—I've got a proposal to make—the jolliest thing in the world."

"Go on. I'm listening."

"Mary ain't quite so well again—is she now?"

"Well, I don't think she's been getting on so fast. I suppose it's the spring weather."

"Why, you may call it summer now. But she ain't as I should like to see her, the darling."

"Well, no. I must confess I'm sometimes rather uneasy about her."

"And there's Jane. She don't look at home somehow."

For sometime Richard had been growing more and more uneasy as the evidence of his daughter's attachment to Charles Wither became plainer. Both he and his wife did the best they could to prevent their meeting, but having learned a little wisdom from the history of his father's family, and knowing well the hastiness of his own temper, he had as yet managed to avoid any open conflict with his daughter, who he knew had inherited his own stubbornness. He had told his brother nothing of this second and now principal source of family apprehension; and the fact that John saw that all was not right with Jane, greatly increased his feeling of how much things were going wrong. He made no reply, however, but sat waiting what was to follow. Accumulating his arguments, the captain went on.

"And there's your wife: she's had a headache almost every day since I came to the house."

"Well, what are you driving at, John?" said his brother, with the more impatience that he knew all John said was true.

"What I'm driving at is this," answered the captain, *bringing-to* suddenly. "You must all make this next voyage in my clipper. It'll do you all a world o' good, and me too."

"Nonsense, John," said Richard, feeling however that a faint light dawned through the proposal.

"Don't call it nonsense till you've slept upon it, Dick. The ship's part mine, and I can make it easy for you. You'll have to pay a little passage-money, just to keep me right with the rest of the owners; but that won't be much, and you're no screw, though I did say you were too greedy after the money. I believe it's not the money so much as the making of it that fills your head."

"Still, you wouldn't have me let the business go to the dogs?"

"No fear of that, with Stopper at the head of affairs. I'll tell you what you must do. You must take him in."

"Into partnership, do you mean?" said Richard, his tone expressing no surprise, for he had thought of this before.

"Yes, I do. You'll have to do it some day, and the sooner the better. If you don't, you'll lose him, and that you'll find won't be a mere loss. That man'll make a dangerous enemy. Where he bites he'll hold. And now's a good time to serve yourself and him too."

"Perhaps you're right, brother," answered the merchant, emptying his glass of claret and filling it again instantly, an action indicating a certain perturbed hesitation not in the least common to him. "I'll turn it over in my mind.—I certainly should not be sorry to have a short holiday. I haven't had one to speak of for nearly twenty years, I do believe."

John judged it better not to press him. He believed from what he knew of himself and his brother too that good advice was best let alone to work its own effects. He turned the conversation to something indifferent.

But after this many talks followed. Mrs. Boxall of course was consulted. Although she shrunk from the thought of a sea voyage, she yet saw in the proposal a way out of many difficulties, especially as giving room for time to work one of

his especial works—that of effacement. So between the three the whole was arranged before either of the young people was spoken to on the subject. Jane heard it with a rush of blood to her heart that left her dark face almost livid. Mary received the news gladly, even merrily, though a slight paleness followed and just indicated that she regarded the journey as the symbol and sign of severed bonds. Julia, a plump child of six, upon whose condition no argument for the voyage could be founded, danced with joy at the idea of going in Uncle John's ship. Mr. Stopper threw no difficulty in the way of accepting a partnership in the concern, and thus matters were arranged.

John Boxall had repeatedly visited his mother during the six weeks he spent at his brother's house. He seldom saw Lucy, however, because of her engagement at the Morgentsterns', until her grandmother's sickness kept her more at home. Then, whether it was that Lucy expected her uncle to be prejudiced against her, or that he really was so prejudiced, I do not know, but the two did not take much to each other. Lucy considered her uncle a common and rough-looking sailor; John Boxall called his niece a fine lady. And so they parted.

On the same day on which Thomas and Lucy had their blow on the river, the *Ningpo* had cleared out of St. Katherine's Dock, and was lying in the Upper Pool, all but ready to drop down with the next tide to Gravesend, where she was to take her passengers on board.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE TEMPTER.

THE next day, Thomas had made up his mind not to go near Guild Court; but in the afternoon Mr. Stopper himself sent him to bring an old ledger from the floor above Mrs. Boxall's. As he got down from his perch, and proceeded to get his hat—

“There's no use in going round such a way,” said Mr. Stopper. “Mr. Boxall's not in; you can go through his room. Here's the key of the door. Only mind you lock it when you come back.”

The key used to lie in Mr. Boxall's drawer, but now Mr. Stopper took it from his own. Thomas was not altogether pleased at the change of approach, though why, he would hardly have been able to tell. Probably he felt something as a miser would feel, into whose treasure-cave the new gallery of a neighboring mine threatened to break. He was, as it were, exposed upon the flank. Annoyance instantly clouded the expression of eagerness which he had not been able to conceal; and neither the light nor the following cloud escaped Mr. Stopper, who, although the region of other men's thoughts was dark as pitch to him in the usual relation he bore to them, yet the moment his interests or—rare case—his feelings brought him into the contact of opposition with any man, all the man's pregnable points lay bare before him.

Thomas had nothing to do but take the key and go. He had now no opportunity of spending more than one moment with Lucy. When the distance was of some length, he could cut

both ways, and pocket the time gained; now there was nothing to save upon. Nevertheless, he sped up the stairs as if he would overtake old Time himself.

Rendered prudent, or cunning, by his affections, he secured the ordered chaos of vellum before he knocked at Mrs. Boxall's door, which he then opened without waiting for the response to his appeal.

“Lucy! Lucy!” he said; “I have but one half minute, and hardly that.”

Lucy appeared with the rim of a rainy sunset about her eyes. The rest of her face was still as a day that belonged to not one of the four seasons—that had nothing to do.

“If you have forgotten yesterday, Thomas, I have not,” she said.

“Oh! never mind yesterday,” he said. “I'm coming in to-night; and I can stay as long as I please. My father and mother are gone to Folkestone, and there's nobody to know when I go home. Isn't it jolly?”

And without waiting for an answer, he scudded like Poppie. But what in Poppie might be graceful, was not dignified in Thomas; and I fear Lucy felt this, when he turned the corner to the stair-case with the huge ledger under his arm, and his coat flying out behind him. But she would not have felt it had she not had on the preceding evening, for the first time, a peep into his character.

As he re-entered the counting-house he was aware of the keen glance cast at him by Stopper, and felt that he reddened. But he laid the ledger on the desk before him, and perched again with as much indifference as he could assume.

Wearily the hours passed. How could they otherwise pass with figures, figures everywhere, Stopper right before him at the double desk, and Lucy one story removed and inaccessible? Some men would work all the better for knowing their treasure so near, but Thomas had not yet reached such a repose. Indeed, he did not yet love Lucy well enough for that. People talk about loving too much; for my part I think all the mischief comes of loving too little.

The dinner-hour at length arrived. Thomas, however, was not in the way of attempting to see Lucy at that time. He would have said that there was too much coming and going of the clerks about that hour: I venture to imagine that a quiet enjoyment of his dinner had something to do with it. Now, although I can well enough understand a young fellow in love being as hungry as a hawk, I can not quite understand his spending an hour over his dinner when the quarter of it would be enough, and the rest might give him if but one chance of one peep at the lady. On the present occasion, however, seeing he had the whole evening in prospect, Thomas may have been quite right to devote himself to his dinner, the newspaper, and anticipation. At all events, he betook himself to one of the courts off Cornhill, and ascended to one of those eating-houses which abound in London city, where a man may generally dine well, and always at moderate expense.

Now this was one of the days on which Thomas usually visited Mr. Molken. But as he had missed two lessons, the spider had become a little anxious about his fly, and knowing that Thomas went to dine at this hour, and knowing

also where he went, he was there before him, and on the outlook for his entrance. This was not the sort of place the German generally frequented. He was more likely to go prowling about Thames Street for his dinner; but when Thomas entered, there he was signaling to him to take his place beside him.

Thomas did not see that in the dark corner of an opposite box sat Mr. Stopper. He obeyed the signal, and a steak was presently broiling for him upon the gridiron at the other end of the room.

"You was not come fore your lesson de lezt time, Mistare Verbose," said Molken.

"No," answered Thomas, who had not yet made a confidant of Mr. Molken. "I was otherwise engaged."

He spoke quite carelessly.

"Ah! yes. Oddervise," said Molken, and said no more.

Presently he broke into a suppressed laugh, which caused Thomas, who was very sensitive as to his personal dignity, to choke over his tankard of bitter ale, with which he was consoling himself for the delay of his steak.

"What is it you find so amusing, Mr. Molken?" he asked.

"I beg your pardon," returned Molken. "It was very rude; but I could not help it. I will tell you one story I did see last night. I am a man of de world, as you know, Mr. Verbose."

My reader must excuse me if I do not keep to the representation of the fellow's German-English. It is hardly worth doing, and I am doubtful, besides, whether I can do it well.

"I am a man of the world," said Molken, "and I was last night in one of those shops, what you call them—paradise; no, the other thing—hell—where they have the spinning thing—the roulette—and the Rouge et Noir, and *extra*. I do not mean to say that I was gambling. Oh! no. I was at the bar having a glass of Judenlip, when lo! and behold! down through the green door, with a burst, comes a young man I knew. He was like yourself, Mr. Verbose, a clerk in a counting-house."

Thomas winced, but said nothing. He regarded his business as he ought to have regarded himself, namely, as something to be ashamed of.

"Well, he comes up to me, and he says, 'Herr Molken, we are old friends; will you lend me a sovereign?' 'No,' I said, 'Mr.—'—I forget the young man's name, but I did know him—'I never lend money for gambling purposes. Get the man who won your last sovereign to lend you another. For my own part, I've had enough of that sort of thing.' For you see, Mr. Thomas, I have gambled in my time—yes, and made money by it, though I spent it as foolishly as I got it. You don't think I would spend my time in teaching *Ich habe, Du hast*, if I hadn't given up gambling. But university men, you know, learn bad habits."

"What did he say to that?" asked Thomas.

"He swore and turned away as if he was choking. But the fact was, Mr. Verbose, I hadn't a sovereign in my possession. I wasn't going to tell him that. But if I had had one, he should have had it; for I can't forget the glorious excitement it used to be to see the gold lying like a yellow mole-hill on the table, and to think that one fortunate turn might send it all into your own pockets."

"But he didn't choke, did he?" said Thomas, weakly trying to be clever.

"No. And I will tell you how it was that he didn't. 'By Jove!' he cried. Now I had seen him fumbling about his waistcoat as if he would tear his heart out, and all at once dive his two forefingers into a little pocket that was meant to hold a watch, only the watch had gone up the spout long ago. 'By Jove!' he said—that's the right swear, isn't it, Mr. Verbose?—and then he rushed through the green door again. I followed him, for I wanted to see what he was after. In half an hour he had broken the bank. He had found a sovereign in that little pocket. How it got there the devil only knew. He swept his money into his pockets and turned to go. I saw the people of the house getting between him and the door, and I saw one of the fellows—I knew him—who had lost money all the evening, going to pick a quarrel with him. For those gamblers have no honor in them. So I opened the door as if to leave the room, and pretending to hesitate as if I had left something, kept it open, and made a sign to him to bolt, which he understood at once, and was down stairs in a moment, and I after him. Now let me tell you a secret," continued Molken, leaning across the table, and speaking very low and impressively—"that young man confessed to me that same evening, that when I refused him the sovereign, he had just lost the last of two hundred pounds of his master's money. To-day I hope he has replaced it honestly as he ought; for his winnings that night came to more than seven hundred."

"But he was a thief," said Thomas, bluntly.

"Well, so he was; but no more a thief than many a respectable man who secures his own and goes on risking other people's money. It's the way of the world. However, as I told you, I gave it up long ago. There *was* a time in my life when I used to live by it."

"How did you manage that?"

"There are certain rules to be observed, that's all. Only you must stick to them. For one thing, you must make up your mind never to lose more than a certain fixed sum any night you play. If you stick to that, you will find your winnings always in excess of your losses."

"How can that be?"

"Oh, I don't pretend to account for it. Gaming has its laws as well as the universe generally. Every thing goes by laws, you know—laws that can not be found out except by experiment; and that, as I say, is one of the laws of gambling."

All this time Mr. Stopper had been reading Mr. Molken's face. Suddenly Tom caught sight of his superior; the warning of Wither rushed back on his mind, and he grew pale as death. Molken perceiving the change, sought for its cause, but saw nothing save a stony gentleman in the opposite box sipping sherry, and picking the ripest pieces out of a Stilton.

"Don't look that way, Molken," said Tom, in an undertone. "That's our Mr. Stopper."

"Well, haven't we as good a right to be here as Mr. Stopper?" returned Molken, in a voice equally inaudible beyond the table, but taking piercing eyeshots at the cause of Tom's discomposure.

The two men very soon had something like

each other's measure. They could each understand his neighbor's rascality, while his own seemed to each only a law of Nature.

"You generally pay, don't you?" added Molken.

Tom laughed.

"Yes, I do generally, and a penny to the cook besides, which, I will be bound, he does not. But that's nothing to the point. He hates me, though why, I'm sure I don't—I can only guess."

"Some girl, I suppose," said Molken, coolly.

Thomas felt too much flattered to endeavor even to dilute the insinuation; and Molken went on.

"Well, but how can the fellow bear malice? Of course, he must have seen from the first that he had no chance with you. I'll tell you what, Worboise; I have had a good deal of experience, and it is my conviction, from what I have seen of you, that you are one of the lucky ones—one of the cleet, you know—born to it, and can't help yourself."

Tom pulled out his watch.

"Half an hour to spare yet," he said. "Come up to the smoking-room."

Having ordered a bottle of Rhine wine, Tom turned to Molken, and said—

"What did you mean by saying that I was one of the lucky ones?"

"Oh, don't you know there are some men born under a lucky star—as they would have said in old times? What the cause is, of course I don't know, except it be that Heaven must have some favorites, if only for the sake of variety. At all events, there is no denying that some men are born to luck. They are lucky in every thing they put their hands to. Did you ever try your luck in a lottery, now?"

"I did in a raffle once."

"Well?"

"I won a picture."

"I told you so! And it would be just the same whatever you tried. You are cut out for it. You have the luck-mark on you. I was sure of it."

"How can you tell that?" asked Tom, lingering like a fly over the sweet poison, and ready to swallow almost any absurdity that represented him as something different from the run of ordinary mortals, of whom he was, as yet at least, a very ordinary specimen.

"Never your mind how I can tell. But I will tell you this much, that I have experience; and your own Bacon says that the laws of every thing are to be found out by observation and experiment. I have observed, and I have experimented, and I tell you you are a lucky one."

Tom stroked the faintest neutrality of a coming mustache, ponderingly and pleasedly, and said nothing.

"By the bye, are you coming to me to-night?" asked Molken.

"No—o," answered Tom, still stroking his upper lip with the thumb and forefinger of his left hand, "I think not. I believe I have an engagement to-night, somewhere or other."

He took out his pocket-book, and pretended to look.

"Yes. I can't have my lesson to-night."

"Then I needn't stop at home for you.—By the way, have you a sovereign about you? I wouldn't trouble you, you know, only, as I told

you, I haven't got one. I believe your quarter is out to-night."

"Oh, I beg your pardon; I ought to have thought of that. I have two half-sovereigns in my pocket, and no more, I am sorry to say. Will one of them do for to-night? You shall have more to-morrow."

"Oh, thank you; it's of no consequence. Well, I don't know—I think I will take the ten shillings, for I want to go out this evening. Yes. Thank you. Never mind to-morrow, *except it be convenient.*"

Tom settled the bill, and put the change of the other half-sovereign in his pocket. Molken left him at the door of the tavern, and he went back to the counting-house.

"Who was that with you at the Golden Fleece, Tom?" asked Mr. Stopper, as he entered; for he took advantage of his position to be as rude as he found convenient.

Taken by surprise, Tom answered at once—

"Mr. Molken."

"And who's he?" asked Stopper again.

"My German master," answered Tom.

The next moment he could have knocked his head against the wall with indignation at himself. For, always behindhand when left to himself, he was ready enough when played upon by another to respond and repent.

"He's got a hangdog phiz of his own," said Mr. Stopper, as he plunged again into the business before him, writing away as deliberately as if it had been on parchment instead of foolscap; for Stopper was never in a hurry, and never behind.

Tom's face flushed red with wrath.

"I'll thank you to be civil in your remarks on my friends, Mr. Stopper."

Mr. Stopper answered with a small puff of windy breath from distended lips. He blew, in short. Tom felt his eyes waver. He grew almost blind with rage. If he had followed his inclination, he would have brought the ruler beside him down, with a terrible crack, on the head before him. "Why didn't he?" does my reader inquire? Just because of his incapacity for action of any sort. He did not refrain in the pity that disarms some men in the midst of their wrath, nor yet from the sense that vengeance is God's business, and will be carried out in a mode rather different from that in which man would prosecute his.

CHAPTER XIX.

HOW TOM SPENT THE EVENING.

WHEN Tom left the office he walked into Mr. Kitley's shop, for he was afraid lest Mr. Stopper should see him turn up to Guild Court. He had almost forgotten Mr. Kitley's behavior about the book he would not keep for him, and his resentment was gone quite. There was nobody in the shop but Mattie.

"Well, chick," said Thomas, kindly, but more condescendingly than suited Miss Matilda's tastes.

"Neither chick nor child," she answered promptly, though where she got the phrase is a mystery, as indeed is the case with almost all the sayings of such children.

"What are you, then? A fairy?"

"If I was, I know what I would do. Oh, wouldn't I just! I should think I would!"

"Well, what would you do, little Miss What's-your-name?"

"My name is Miss Kately; but that's neither here nor there. Oh, no! it's not me! Wouldn't I just!"

"Well, Miss Kately, I want to know what you would do if you were a fairy?"

"I would turn your eyes into gooseberries, and your tongue into a bit of leather a foot long; and every time you tried to speak your long tongue would slap your blind eyes and make you cry."

"What a terrible doom!" returned Thomas, offended at the child's dislike to him, but willing to carry it off. "Why?"

"Because you've made Miss Burton's eyes red, you naughty man! I know you. It must be you. Nobody else could make her eyes red but you, and you go and do it."

Thomas's first movement was of anger; for he felt, as all who have concealments are ready to feel, that he was being uncomfortably exposed. He turned his back on the child, and proceeded to examine the books on a level with his face. While he was thus engaged, Mr. Kately entered.

"How do you do, Mr. Worboise?" he said. "I've got another copy of that book you and I fell out about some time ago. I can let you have this one at half the price."

It was evident that the bookseller wanted to be conciliatory. Thomas, in his present mood, was inclined to repel his advances, but he shrunk from contention, and said—

"Thank you. I shall be glad to have it. How much is it?"

Mr. Kately named the amount, and, ashamed to appear again unable, even at the reduced price, to pay for it, Thomas pulled out the last farthing of the money in his pocket, which came to the exact sum required, and pocketed the volume.

"If you would excuse a man who has seen something of the world—more than was good for him at one time of his life—Mr. Worboise," said Mr. Kately, as he pocketed the money, "I would give you a hint about that German up the court. He's a clever fellow enough, I dare say—perhaps too clever. Don't you have any thing to do with him beyond the German. Take my advice. I don't sit here all day at the mouth of the court for nothing. I can see what comes in my way as well as another man."

"What is there to say against him, Mr. Kately? I haven't seen any harm in him."

"I'm not going to commit myself in warning you, Mr. Worboise. But I do warn you. Look out, and don't let him lead you into mischief."

"I hope I am able to take care of myself, Mr. Kately," said Thomas, with a touch of offense.

"I hope you are, Mr. Worboise," returned the bookseller, dryly; "but there's no offense meant in giving you the hint."

At this moment Mr. Stopper passed the window. Thomas listened for the echo of his steps up the archway, and as none came, he knew that he had gone along the street. He waited, therefore, till he thought he must be out of sight, and then sped unasily from the shop, round the corner, and up to Mrs. Boxall's door, which the old lady herself opened for him, not looking so pleased as usual to see him. Mr. Molken was

watching from the opposite ground-floor window. A few minutes after, Mr. Stopper repassed the window of Mr. Kately's shop, and went into the counting-house with a pass-key.

Thomas left Mrs. Boxall to shut the door, and rushed eagerly up the stairs, and into the sitting-room. There he found the red eyes of which Mattie had spoken. Lucy rose and held out her hand, but her manner was constrained, and her lips trembled as if she were going to cry. Thomas would have put his arm round her and drawn her to him, but she gently pushed his arm away, and he felt as many a man has felt, and every man, perhaps, ought to feel, that in the gentlest repulse of the woman he loves there is something terribly imperative and absolute.

"Why, Lucy!" he said, in a tone of hurt; "what have I done?"

"If you can forget so soon, Thomas," answered Lucy, "I can not. Since yesterday I see things in a different light altogether. I can not, for your sake any more than my own, allow things to go on in this doubtful way."

"Oh! but, Lucy, I was taken unawares yesterday; and to-day, now I have slept upon it, I don't see there is any such danger. I ought to be a match for that brute Stopper, anyhow."

Yet the brute Stopper had outreached him, or, at least, "served him out" three or four times that very day, and he had refused to acknowledge it to himself, which was all his defense, poor wretch.

"But that is not all the question, Thomas. It is not right. At least, it seems to me that it is not right to go on like this. People's friends ought to know. I would not have done it if grannie hadn't been to know. But then I ought to have thought of your friends as well as my own."

"But there would be no difficulty if I had only a grandmother," urged Thomas, "and one as good as yours. I shouldn't have thought of not telling."

"I don't think the difficulty of doing right makes it unnecessary to do it," said Lucy.

"I think you might trust that to me, Lucy," said Thomas, falling back upon his old attempted relation of religious instructor to his friend.

Lucy was silent for a moment; but after what she had gone through in the night, she knew that the time had come for altering their relative position if not the relation itself.

"No, Thomas," she said; "I must take my own duty into my own hands. I will not go on this way."

"Do you think then, Lucy, that in affairs of this kind a fellow ought to do just what his parents want?"

"No, Thomas. But I do think he ought not to keep such things secret from them."

"Not even if they are unreasonable and tyrannical?"

"No. A man who will not take the consequences of loving can not be much of a lover."

"Lucy!" cried Thomas, now stung to the heart.

"I can't help it, Thomas," said Lucy, bursting into tears; "I must speak the truth, and if you can not bear it, the worse for me—and for you, too, Thomas."

"Then you mean to give me up?" said Thomas, pathetically, without, however, any real fear of such an unthinkable catastrophe.

"If it be giving you up to say I will not marry a man who is too much afraid of his father and mother to let them know what he is about, then I do give you up. But it will be you who give me up if you refuse to acknowledge me as you ought."

Lucy could not have talked like this ever before in her life. She had gone through an eternity of suffering in the night. She was a woman now. She had been but a girl before. Now she stood high above Thomas. He was but a boy still, and not beautiful as such. She was all at once old enough to be his mother. There was no escape from the course she took; no *dollying* was possible. This must be. But she was and would be gentle with poor Thomas.

"You do not love me, Lucy," he cried.

"My poor Thomas, I do love you; love you so dearly that I trust and pray you may be worthy of my love. Go and do as you ought, and come back to me—like one of the old knights you talk about," she added, with the glimmer of a hopeful smile, "bringing victory to his lady."

"I will, I will," said Thomas, overcome by her solemn beauty and dignified words. It was as if she had cast the husk of the girl, and had come out a saving angel. But the perception of this was little more to him yet than a poetic sense of painful pleasure.

"I will, I will," he said. "But I can not tonight, for my father and mother are both at Folkestone. But I will write to them—that will be best."

"Any way you like, Thomas. I don't care how you do it, so it is done."

All this time the old lady, having seen that something was wrong, had discreetly kept out of the way, for she knew that the quarrels of lovers at least are most easily settled between themselves. Thomas now considered it all over and done with, and Lucy, overjoyed at her victory, leaned into his arms, and let him kiss her ten times. Such a man, she ought not, perhaps—only she did not know better—to have allowed to touch her till he had done what he had promised. To some people the promise is the difficult part, to others the performance. To Thomas, unhappily, the promising was easy.

They did not hear the door open. It was now getting dark, but the two were full in the light of the window, and visible enough to the person who entered. He stood still for one moment, during which the lovers unwound their arms. Only when parting, they became aware that a man was in the room. He came forward with hasty step. It was Richard Boxall. Thomas looked about for his hat. Lucy stood firm and quiet, waiting.

"Lucy, where is your grandmother?"

"Up stairs, uncle, I believe."

"Is she aware of that fellow's presence?"

"You are not very polite, uncle," said Lucy, with dignity. "This is my friend, Mr. Worboise, whom I believe you know. Of course I do not receive visitors without my grandmother's knowledge."

Mr. Boxall choked an oath in his throat, or rather the oath nearly choked him. He turned and went down the stair again; but neither of them heard the outer door close. Thomas and Lucy stared at each other in dismay.

The facts of the case were these, as near as I can guess. The *Ninipo* had dropped down to

Gravesend, and the Boxalls had joined her there. But some delay had arisen, and she was not to sail till the next morning. Mr. Boxall had resolved to make use of the time thus gained or lost, and had come up to town. I can not help believing that it was by contrivance of Mr. Stopper, who had watched Tom and seen him go up the court, that he went through the door from his private room, instead of going round, which would have given warning to the lovers. Possibly he returned intending to see his mother; but after the discovery he made, avoided her partly because he was angry and would not quarrel with her the last thing before his voyage. Upon maturer consideration, he must have seen that he had no ground for quarreling with her at all, for she could have known nothing about Tom in relation to Mary, except Tom had told her, which was not at all likely. But before he had had time to see this, he was on his way to Gravesend again. He was so touchy as well as obstinate about every thing wherein his family was concerned, that the sight of Tom with his Mary's cousin was enough to drive all reflection out of him for an hour at least.

Thomas and Lucy stood and stared at each other. Thomas stared from consternation; Lucy only stared at Tom.

"Well, Thomas," she said at last, with a sweet watery smile; for she had her lover, and she had lost her idol. She had got behind the scenes, and could worship no more; but Dagon was a fine idea, notwithstanding his fall, and if she could not set him up on his pedestal again, she would at least try to give him an arm-chair. Fish-tailed Dagon is an unfortunate choice for the simile, I know, critical reader; but let it pass, and the idea it illustrates being by no means original, let the figure at least have some claim to the distinction.

"Now he'll go and tell my father," said Tom; "and I wish you knew what a row my mother and he will make between them."

"But why, Tom? Have they any prejudice against me? Do they know there is such a person?"

"I don't know. They may have heard of you at your uncle's."

"Then why should they be so very angry?"

"My father because you have no money, and my mother because you have no grace."

"No grace, Tom! Am I so very clumsy?"

Thomas burst out laughing.

"I forgot," he said. "You were not brought up to my mother's slang. She and her set use Bible words till they make you hate them."

"But you shouldn't hate them. They are good in themselves, though they be wrong used."

"That's all very well. Only if you had been tried with them as I have been, I am afraid you would have had to give in to hating them, as well as me, Lucy. I never did like that kind of slang. But what am I to do with old Boxall—I beg your pardon—with your uncle Richard? He'll be sure to write to my father before he sails. They're friends, you know."

"Well, but you will be beforehand with him, and then it won't matter. You were going to do it at any rate, and the thing now is to have the start of him," said Lucy, perhaps not sorry to have in the occurrence an additional spur to prick the sides of Thomas's intent.

"Yes, yes, that's all very well," returned Thomas, dubiously, as if there was a whole world behind it.

"Now, dear Tom, do go home at once, and write. You will save the last post if you do," said Lucy decidedly; for she saw more and more the necessity, for Thomas's own sake, of urging him to action.

"So, instead of giving me a happy evening, you are going to send me home to an empty house!"

"You see the thing must be done, or my uncle will be before you," said Lucy, beginning to be vexed with him for his utter want of decision, and with herself for pushing him toward such an act. Indeed, she felt all at once that perhaps she had been unmaidently. But there was no choice except to do it, or break off the engagement.

Now whether it was that her irritation influenced her tone and infected Tom with like irritation, or that he could not bear being thus driven to do what he so much disliked, while on the whole he would have preferred that Mr. Boxall should tell his father and so save him from the immediate difficulty, the evil spirit in him arose once more in rebellion, and, like the mule that he was, he made an effort to unseat the gentle power that would have urged him along the only safe path on the mountain-side.

"Lucy, I will not be badgered in this way. If you can't trust me, you won't get any thing that way."

Lucy drew back a step and looked at him for one moment; then turned and left the room. Thomas waited for a minute; then, choosing to arouse a great sense of injury in his bosom, took his hat, and went out, banging the door behind him.

Just as he banged Lucy's door, out came Mr. Molken from his. It was as if the devil had told a hawk to wait, and he would fetch him a pigeon.

"Coming to have your lesson after all?" he asked, as Thomas, from very indecision, made a step or two toward him.

"No; I don't feel inclined for a lesson tonight."

"Where are you going, then?"

"Oh, I don't know," answered Tom, trying to look nohow in particular.

"Come along with me, then. I'll show you something of life after dark."

"But where are you going?"

"You'll see that when we get there. You're not afraid, are you?"

"Not I," answered Tom; "only a fellow likes to know where he's going. That's all."

"Well, where would you like to go? A young fellow like you really ought to know something of the world he lives in. You are clever enough, in all conscience, if you only knew a little more."

"Go on, then. I don't care. It's nothing to me where I go. Only," Tom added, "I have no money in my pocket. I spent my last shilling on this copy of Goethe's poems."

"Ah, you never spent your money better! There was a man, now, that never contented himself with hearsay! He would know all the ways of life for himself—else how was he to judge of them all? He would taste of every thing, that he might know the taste of it. Why should a man be ignorant of any thing that can be known?

Come along. I will take care of you. See if I don't!"

"But you can't be going anywhere in London for nothing. And I tell you I haven't got a farthing in my purse."

"Never mind that. It shan't cost you any thing. Now I am going to make a clean breast of it, as you English call it; though why there should be any thing dirty in keeping your own secrets I don't know. I want to make an experiment with you."

"Give me chloroform, and cut me up?" said Tom, reviving as his quarrel with Lucy withdrew a little into the background.

"Not quite that. You shall neither take chloroform, nor have your eyes bandaged, nor be tied to the table. You can go the moment you have had enough of it. It is merely for the sake of my theory. Entirely an experiment."

"Perhaps, if you told me your theory, I might judge of the nature of the experiment."

"I told you all about it the other day. You are one of those fortunate mortals doomed to be lucky. Why, I knew one—not a gambler, I don't mean that—whose friends at last would have nothing to do with him where any chance was concerned. If it was only sixpenny points, they wouldn't play a single rubber of whist with him except he was their partner. In fact, the poor wretch was reduced to play only with strangers,—comparative strangers I mean, of course. He won every thing."

"Then what do you want with me? Out with it."

"I only want to back you. You don't understand the thing. You shan't spend a farthing. I have plenty."—Here Molken pulled a few sovereigns from his pocket as he went on, and it never occurred to Tom to ask how he had them, seeing he was so hard-up at dinner-time.—"It's all for my theory of luck, I assure you. I have given up practical gambling, as I told you, long ago. It's not right. I have known enough about it, I confess to you—you know *we* understand each other; but I confess too—my theory—I am anxious about that."

All this time they had been walking along, Thomas paying no heed to the way they went. He would have known little about it, however, well as he thought he knew London, for they had entered a region entirely unknown to him.

"But you haven't told me, after all," he said, "where you are going."

"Here," answered Molken, pushing open the swing-door of a public-house.

* * * * *

The next morning Thomas made his appearance in the office at the usual hour, but his face was pale and his eyes were red. His shirt-front was tumbled and dirty, and he had nearly forty shillings in his pocket. He never looked up from his work, and now and then pressed his hand to his head. This Mr. Stopper saw and enjoyed.

CHAPTER XX.

HOW LUCY SPENT THE NIGHT.

WHEN Lucy left the room, with her lover—if lover he could be called—alone in it, her throat felt as if it would burst with the swelling of some-

thing like bodily grief. She did not know what it was, for she had never felt any thing like it before. She thought she was going to die. Her grandmother could have told her that she would be a happy woman if she did not have such a swelling in her throat a good many times without dying of it: but Lucy strove desperately to hide it from her. She went to her own room and threw herself on her bed, but started up again when she heard the door bang, flew to the window, and saw all that passed between Molken and Thomas till they left the court together. She had never seen Molken so full in the face before; and whether it was from this full view, or that his face wore more of the spider expression upon this occasion, I do not know—I incline to the latter, for I think that an on-looker can read the expression of two countenances better, sometimes, than those engaged in conversation can read each other's—however it was, she felt a dreadful repugnance to Molken from that moment, and became certain that he was trying in some way or other to make his own out of Thomas. With this new distress was mingled the kind but mistaken self-reproach that she had driven him to it. Why should she not have borne with the poor boy, who was worried to death between his father and mother and Mr. Stopper and that demon down there? He would be all right if they would only leave him alone. He was but a poor boy, and, alas! she had driven him away from his only friend—for such she was sure she was. She threw herself on her bed, but she could not rest. All the things in the room seemed pressing upon her, as if they had staring eyes in their heads; and there was no heart anywhere.

Her grandmother heard the door bang, and came in search of her.

"What's the matter, my pet?" she asked, as she entered the room and found her lying on her bed.

"Oh, nothing, grannie," answered Lucy, hardly knowing what she said.

"You've quarreled with that shilly-shally bean of yours, I suppose. Well, let him go—he's not much."

Lucy made no reply, but turned her face toward the wall, as mourners did ages before the birth of King Hezekiah. Grannie had learned a little wisdom in her long life, and left her. She would get a cup of tea ready, for she had great faith in bodily cures for mental aches. But before the tea was well in the tea-pot Lucy came down in her bonnet and shawl.

She could not rest. She tossed and turned. What could Thomas be about with that man? What mischief might he not take him into? Good women, in their supposed ignorance of men's wickedness, are not infrequently like the angels, in that they understand it perfectly, without the knowledge soiling one feather of their wings. They see it clearly—even from afar. Now, although Lucy could not know so much of it as many are compelled to know, she had some acquaintance with the lowest castes of humanity, and the vice of the highest is much the same as the vice of the lowest, only in general worse—more refined, and more detestable. So, by a natural process, without knowing how, she understood something of the kind of gulf into which a man like Molken might lead Thomas, and she could not bear the thoughts that sprung out of this understanding. Hardly know-

ing what she did, she got up and put on her bonnet and shawl, and went down stairs.

"Where on earth are you going, Lucy?" asked her grandmother, in some alarm.

Lucy did not know in the least what she meant to do. She had had a vague notion of setting out to find Thomas somewhere, and rescue him from the grasp of Moloch, but, save for the restlessness with which her misery filled her, she could never have entertained the fancy. The moment her grandmother asked her the question, she saw how absurd it would be. Still she could not rest. So she invented an answer, and ordered her way according to her word.

"I'm going to see little Mattie," she said. "The child is lonely, and so am I. I will take her out for a walk."

"Do then, my dear. It will do you both good," said the grandmother. "Only you must have a cup o' tea first."

Lucy drank her cup of tea, then rose, and went to the book-shop. Mr. Kiteley was there alone.

"How's Mattie to-night, Mr. Kiteley? Is she any better, do you think?" she asked.

"She's in the back room there. I'll call her," said the book-seller, without answering either of Lucy's questions.

"Oh! I'll just go in to her. You wouldn't mind me taking her out for a little walk, would you?"

"Much obliged to you, miss," returned the book-seller, heartily. "It's not much amusement the poor child has. I'm always meaning to do better for her, but I'm so tied with the shop that—I don't know hardly how it is, but somehow we go on the old way. She'll be delighted."

Lucy went into the back parlor, and there sat Mattie, with her legs curled up beneath her on the window-sill, reading a little book, thumbed and worn at the edges, and brown with dust and use.

"Well, Miss Burton," she cried, before Lucy had time to speak, "I've found something here. I think it's what people call poetry. I'm not sure; but I am sure it's good, whatever it is. Only I can't read it very well. Will you read it to me, please, miss? I do like to be read to."

"I want you to come out for a walk with me, Mattie," said Lucy, who was in no humor for reading.

Wise Mattie glanced up in her face. She had recognized the sadness in her tone.

"Read this first, please, Miss Burton," she said. "I think it will do you good. Things *will* go wrong. I'm sure it's very sad. And I don't know what's to be done with the world. It's always going wrong. It's just like father's watch. He's always saying there's something out of order in its inside, and he's always a-taking of it to the doctor, as he calls the watch-maker to amuse me. Only I'm not very easy to amuse," reflected Mattie, with a sigh. "But," she resumed, "I wish I knew the doctor to set the world right. The clock o' St. Jacob's goes all right, but I'm sure Mr. Potter ain't the doctor to set the world right, any more than Mr. Derry is for Mr. Kiteley's watch."

The associations in Mattie's mind were not always very clear either to herself or other people: they were generally just, notwithstanding.

"But you have never been to Mr. Potter's church to know, Mattie."

"Oh! haven't I just? Times and times. Mr.

Spelt has been a-taking of me. I do believe mother thinks I'm going to die, and wants to get me ready. I wonder what it all means."

"Nonsense, Mattie!" said Lucy, already turned a little aside from her own sorrow by the words of the child. "You must put on your hat, and come out with me."

"My bonnet, miss. Hats are only fit for very little girls. And I won't go till you read this poetry to me—if it be poetry."

Lucy took the book, and read. The verses were as follow :

As Christ went into Jericho town,
'Twas darkness all, from toe to crown,
About blind Bartimeus,
He said, Our eyes are more than dim,
And so, of course, we don't see Him,
But David's Son can see us.

Cry out, cry out, blind brother, cry;
Let not salvation dear go by;
Have mercy, Son of David,
Though they were blind, they both could hear—
They heard, and cried, and he drew near;
And so the blind were saved.

O Jesus Christ, I'm deaf and blind,
Nothing comes through into my mind,
I only am not dumb.
Although I see thee not, nor hear,
I cry because thou may'st be near:
O Son of David, come.

A finger comes into my ear;
A voice comes through the deafness drear;
Poor eyes, no more be dim.
A hand is laid upon mine eyes;
I hear, I feel, I see, I rise—
'Tis He, I follow him.

Before Lucy had finished reading the not very poetic lines, they had somehow or other reached her heart. For they had one quality belonging to most good poetry—that of directness or simplicity; and never does a mind like hers—like hers, I mean, in truthfulness—turn more readily toward the unscen, the region out of which even that which is seen comes, than when a rain-cloud enwraps and hides the world around it, leaving thus, as it were, only the passage upward open. She closed the little book gently, laid it down, got Mattie's bonnet, and heedless of the remarks of the child upon the poem, put it on her, and led her out. Her heart was too full to speak. As they went through the shop—

"A pleasant walk to you, ladies," said the book-seller.

"Thank you, Mr. Kately," returned his daughter, for Lucy could not yet speak.

They had left Bagot Street, and were in one of the principal thoroughfares, before Lucy had got the lump in her throat sufficiently swallowed to be able to speak. She had not yet begun to consider where they should go. When they came out into the wider street, the sun, now near the going down, was shining golden through a rosy fog. Long shadows lay or flitted about over the level street. Lucy had never before taken any notice of the long shadows of evening. Although she was a town girl, and had therefore had comparatively few chances, yet in such wide streets as she had sometimes to traverse they were not a rare sight. In the city, to be sure, they are much rarer. But the reason she saw them now was that her sorrowful heart saw the sorrowfulness of the long shadows out of the rosy mist, and made her mind observe them. The sight brought the tears again into her eyes, and yet soothed her. They looked so strange upon

that wood-paved street, that they seemed to have wandered from some heathy moor and lost themselves in the labyrinth of the city. Even more than the scent of the hay in the early morning, floating into the silent streets from the fields round London, are these long shadows to the lover of nature, convincing him that what seems the unnatural Babylon of artifice and untruth, is yet at least within the region of nature, contained in her bosom and subjected to her lovely laws; is on the earth as truly as the grassy field upon which the child sees with delighted awe his very own shadow stretch out to such important, yea, portentous length. Even hither come the marvels of Nature's magic. Not all the commonplaces of ugly dwellings, and cheating shops that look churches in the face and are not ashamed, can shut out that which gives mystery to the glen far withdrawn, and loveliness to the mountain-side. From this moment Lucy began to see and feel things as she had never seen or felt them before. Her weeping had made way for a deeper spring in her nature to flow—a gain far more than sufficient to repay the loss of such a lover as Thomas, if indeed she must lose him.

But Mattie saw the shadows too.

"Well, miss, who'd have thought of such a place as this! I declare it bewilders my poor head. I feel every time a horse puts his foot on my shadow as if I must cry out. Isn't it silly? It's all my big head—it's not me, you know, miss."

Lucy could not yet make the remark, and therefore I make it for her—how often we cry out when something steps on our shadow, passing yards away from ourselves! There is not a phenomenon of disease—not even of insanity—that has not its counterpart in our moral miseries, all springing from want of faith in God. At least, so it seems to me. That will account for it all, or looks as if it would; and nothing else does.

It seems to me, too, that in thinking of the miseries and wretchedness in the world we seldom think of the other side. We hear of an event in association with some certain individual, and we say—"How dreadful! How miserable!" And perhaps we say—"Is there—can there be a God in the earth when such a thing can take place?" But we do not see into the region of actual suffering or conflict. We do not see the heart where the shock falls. We neither see the proud bracing of energies to meet the ruin that threatens, nor the gracious faint in which the weak escape from writhing. We do not see the abatement of pain which is Paradise to the tortured; we do not see the gentle upholding in sorrow that comes even from the ministrations of nature—not to speak of human nature—to delicate souls. In a word, we do not see, and the sufferer himself does not understand, how God is present every moment, comforting, upholding, heeding that the pain shall not be more than can be borne, making the thing possible and not hideous. I say nothing of the peaceable fruits that are to spring therefrom; and who shall dare to say where they shall not follow upon such tearing up of the soil? Even those long shadows gave Lucy some unknown comfort, flowing from Nature's recognition of the loss of her lover; and she clasped the little hand more tenderly, as if she would thus return her thanks to Nature for the kindness received.

To get out of the crowd on the pavement Lucy

turned aside into a lane. She had got half way down it before she discovered that it was one of those through which she had passed the night before when she went with Thomas to the river. She turned at once to leave it. As she turned, right before her stood an open church door. It was one of those sepulchral city churches, where the voice of the clergyman sounds ghostly, and it seems as if the dead below were more real in their presence than the half dozen worshippers scattered among the pews.

On this occasion, however, there were seven present when Lucy and Mattie entered and changed the mystical number to the magical.

It was a church named outlandishly after a Scandinavian saint. Some worthy had endowed a week-evening sermon there after better fashion than another had endowed the poor of the parish. The name of the latter was recorded in golden letters upon a black tablet in the vestibule, as the donor of £200, with the addition in letters equally golden, *None of which was ever paid by his trustees.*

I will tell you who the worshippers were. There was the housekeeper in a neighboring warehouse, who had been in a tumult all the day, and at night-fall thought of the kine-browed fields of her childhood, and went to church. There was an old man who had once been manager of a bank, and had managed it ill both for himself and his company; and having been dismissed in consequence, had first got weak in the brain, and then begun to lay up treasure in heaven. Then came a brother and two sisters, none of them under seventy. The former kept shifting his brown wig and taking snuff the whole of the service, and the latter two wiping, with yellow silk handkerchiefs, brown faces inlaid with coal-dust. They could not agree well enough to live together, for their father's will was the subject of constant quarrel. They therefore lived in three lodgings at considerable distances apart. But every night in the week they met at this or that church similarly endowed, sat or knelt or stood in holy silence or sacred speech for an hour and a half, walked together to the end of the lane discussing the sermon, and then separated till the following evening. Thus the better parts in them made a refuge of the house of God, where they came near to each other, and the destroyer kept a little aloof for the season. These, with the beadle and his wife, and Lucy and Mattie, made up the congregation.

Now when they left the lane there was no sun to be seen; but when they entered the church, there he was—his last rays pouring in through a richly-stained window, the only beauty of the building. This window—a memorial one—was placed in the northern side of the chancel, whence a passage through houses, chimneys, and churches led straight to the sunset, down which the last rays I speak of came speeding for one brief moment ere all was gone, and the memorial as faded and grey as the memory of the man to whom it was dedicated.

This change from the dark lane to the sun-lighted church, laid hold of Lucy's feelings. She did not know what it made her feel, but it aroused her with some vague sense of that sphere of glory which enwraps all our lower spheres, and she bowed her knees and her head, and her being worshiped, if her thoughts were too troubled to

go upward. The prayers had commenced and she kneeled, the words "He pardoneth; and absolveth," were the first that found luminous entrance into her soul; and with them came the picture of Thomas, as he left the court with the man of the bad countenance. Of him, and what he might be about, her mind was full; but every now and then a flash of light, in the shape of words, broke through the mist of her troubled thoughts, and testified of the glory-sphere beyond; till at length her mind was so far calmed that she became capable of listening a little to the discourse of the preacher.

He was not a man of the type of Mr. Potter of St. Jacob's, who considered himself possessed of worldly privileges in virtue of a heavenly office not one of whose duties he fulfilled in a heavenly fashion. Some people considered Mr. Fuller very silly for believing that he might do good in a church like this, and with a congregation like this, by speaking that which he knew, and testifying that which he had seen. But he did actually believe it. Somehow or other—I think because he was so much in the habit of looking up to the Father—the prayers took a hold of him once more every time he read them; and he so delighted in the truths he saw that he rejoiced to set them forth—was actually glad to *talk* about them to any one who would listen. When he confessed his feeling about congregations, he said that he preferred twelve people to a thousand. This he considered a weakness, however; except that he could more easily let his heart out to the twelve.

He took for his text the words of our Lord, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden." He could not see the strangers, for they sat behind a pillar, and therefore he had no means for discovering that each of them had a heavy-laden heart: Lucy was not alone in trouble, for Syne had been hard upon Mattie that day. He addressed himself especially to the two old women before him, of whose story he knew nothing, though their faces were as well known to him as the pillars of the church. But the basin into which the fountain of his speech flowed was the heart of those girls.

No doubt presented itself as to the truth of what the preacher was saying; nor could either of them have given a single argument from history or criticism for the reality of the message upon which the preacher founded his exhortation. The truth is not dependent upon proof for its working. Its relation to the human being is essential, is in the nature of things; so that if it be but received in faith—that is, acted upon—it works its own work, and needs the buttressing of no arguments any more than the true operation of a healing plant is dependent upon a knowledge of Dioscorides. My reader must not, therefore, suppose that I consider doubt an unholy thing; on the contrary, I consider spiritual doubt a far more precious thing than intellectual conviction, for it springs from the awaking of a deeper necessity than any that can be satisfied from the region of logic. But when the truth has begun to work its own influence in any heart, that heart has begun to rise out of the region of doubt.

When they came from the church, Lucy and Mattie walked hand in hand after the sisters and brother, and heard them talk.

"He's a young one, that!" said the old man.

"He'll know a little better by the time he's as old as I am."

"Well, I did think he went a little too far when he said a body might be as happy in the work'us as with thousands of pounds in the Bank of England."

"I don't know," interposed the other sister. "He said it depended on what you'd got inside you. Now, if you've got a bad temper inside you, all you've got won't make you happy."

"Thank you, sister. You're very polite, as usual. But, after all, where should we have been but for the trifle we've got in the bank?"

"You two might ha' been living together like sisters, instead of quarreling like two cats, if the money had gone as it ought to," said the old man, who considered that the whole property belonged of right to him.

By this time they had reached the end of the lane, and, without a word to each other, they separated.

"Syne," said Mattie, significantly. Syne was evidently her evil incarnation. Lucy did not reply, but hastened home with her, anxious to be alone. She did not leave the child, however, before she had put her to bed, and read again the hymn that had taken her fancy before they went out.

I will now show my reader how much of the sermon remained upon Lucy's mind. She sat a few minutes with her grandmother, and then told her that she felt better, but would like to go to bed. So she took her candle and went. As soon as she had closed the door, she knelt down by her bedside, and said something like this—more broken, and with long pauses between— but like this:

"O Jesus Christ, I come. I don't know any other way to come. I speak to thee. Oh, hear me. I am weary and heavy laden. Give me rest. Help me to put on the yoke of thy meekness and thy lowliness of heart, which thou sayest will give rest to our souls. I can not do it without thy help. Thou couldst do it without help. I can not. Teach me. Give me thy rest. How am I to begin? How am I to take thy yoke on me? I must be meek. I am very troubled and vexed. Am I angry? Am I unforgiving? Poor Thomas! Lord Jesus, have mercy upon Thomas. He does not know what he is doing. I will be very patient. I will sit with my hands folded, and bear all my sorrow, and not vex Grannie with it; and I won't say an angry word to Thomas. But, O Lord, have mercy upon him, and make him meek and lowly of heart. I have not been sitting at thy feet and learning of thee. Thou canst take all my trouble away by making Thomas good. I ought to have tried hard to keep him in the way his mother taught him, and I have been idle and self-indulgent, and taken up with my music and dresses. I have not looked to my heart to see whether it was meek and lowly like thine. O Lord, thou hast given me every thing, and I have not thought about thee. I thank thee that thou hast made me miserable, for now I shall be thy child. Thou canst bring Thomas home again to thee. Thou canst make him meek and lowly of heart, and give rest to his soul. Amen."

Is it any wonder that she should have risen from her knees comforted? I think not. She was already—gentle and good as she had always

been—more meek and lowly. She had begun to regard this meekness as the yoke of Jesus, and therefore to will it. Already, in a measure, she was a partaker of his peace.

Worn out by her suffering, and soothed by her prayer, she fell asleep the moment she laid her head upon the pillow. And thus Lucy passed the night.

CHAPTER XXI.

MORE SHUFFLING.

TOM WORE THE NEXT NIGHT with a racking headache. Gladly would he have gone to Lucy to comfort him, but he was too much ashamed of his behavior to her the night before, and too uneasy in his conscience. He was, indeed, in an abject condition of body, intellect, and morals. He went at once to his own room and to bed; fell asleep; woke in the middle of the night miserably gnawed by "Don Worm, the conscience;" tried to pray, and found it did him no good; turned his thoughts to Lucy, and burst into tears at the recollection of how he had treated her, imagining over and over twenty scenes in which he begged her forgiveness, till he fell asleep at last, dreamed that she turned her back upon him, and refused to hear him, and woke in the morning with the resolution of going to see her that night, and confessing every thing.

His father had come home after he went to bed, and it was with great trepidation that he went down to breakfast, almost expecting to find that he knew already of his relation to Lucy. But Richard Boxall was above that kind of thing, and Mr. Worboise was evidently free from any suspicion of the case. He greeted his son kindly, or rather frankly, and seemed to be in good spirits.

"Our friends are well down the Channel by this time, with such a fair wind," he said. "Boxall's a lucky man to be able to get away from business like that. I wish you had taken a fancy to Mary, Tom. She's sure to get engaged before she comes back. Shipboard's a great place for getting engaged. Some hungry fellow, with a red coat and an empty breeches-pocket, is sure to pick her up. You might have had her if you had liked. However, you may do as well yet; and you needn't be in a hurry now. It's not enough that there's as good fish in the sea: they must come to your net, you know."

Tom laughed it off, went to his office, worked the weary day through, and ran round to Guild Court the moment he left business.

Lucy had waked in the night as well as Tom; but she had waked to the hope that there was a power somewhere—a power working good, and upholding them that love it; to the hope that a thought lived all through the dark, and would one day make the darkness light about her; to the hope that a heart of love and help was at the heart of things, and would show itself for her need. When, therefore, Tom knocked—timidly almost—at the door, and opened it inquiringly, she met him with a strange light in her pale face, and a smile flickering about a lip that trembled in sympathy with her rain-clouded eyes. She held out her hand to him cordially, but neither offered to embrace—Thomas from shame, and Lucy

from a feeling of something between that had to be removed before things could be as they were—or rather before their outward behavior to each other could be the same, for things could not to all eternity be the same again: they must be infinitely better and more beautiful, or cease altogether.

Thomas gave a look for one moment full in Lucy's eyes, and then dropped his own, holding her still by the consenting hand.

"Will you forgive me, Lucy?" he said, in a voice partly choked by feeling, and partly by the presence of Mrs. Boxall, who, however, could not hear what passed between them, for she sat knitting at the other end of the large room.

"Oh, Tom!" answered Lucy, with a gentle pressure of his hand.

Now, as all that Tom wanted was to be reinstated in her favor, he took the words as the seal of the desired reconciliation, and went no farther with any confession. The words, however, meaning simply that she loved him and wanted to love him, ought to have made Tom the more anxious to confess all—not merely the rudeness of which he had been guilty and which had driven her from the room, but the wrong he had done her in spending the evening in such company; for surely it was a grievous wrong to a pure girl like Lucy to spend the space between the last and the next pressure of her hand in an atmosphere of vice. But the cloud cleared from his brow, and, with a sudden reaction of spirits, he began to be merry. To this change, however, Lucy did not respond. The cloud seemed rather to fall more heavily over her countenance. She turned from him, and went to a chair opposite her grandmother. Tom followed, and sat down beside her. He was sympathetic enough to see that things were not right between them after all. But he referred it entirely to her uneasiness at his parents' ignorance of their engagement.

Some of my readers may think that Lucy too was to blame for want of decision; that she ought to have refused to see Thomas even once again, till he had made his parents aware of their relation to each other. But knowing how little sympathy and help he had from those parents, she felt that to be severe upon him thus would be like turning him out into a snow-storm to find his way home across a desolate moor; and her success by persuasion would be a better thing for Thomas than her success by compulsion. No doubt, if her rights alone had to be considered, and not the necessities of Thomas's moral nature, the plan she did not adopt would have been the best. But no one liveth to himself—not even a woman whose dignity is in danger—and Lucy did not think of herself alone. Yet, for the sake of both, she remained perfectly firm in her purpose that Thomas should do something.

"Your uncle has said nothing about that unfortunate rencontre, Lucy," said Tom, hoping that what had relieved him would relieve her. "My father came home last night, and the paternal brow is all serene."

"Then I suppose you said something about it, Tom?" said Lucy, with a faint hope dawning in her heart.

"Oh! there's time enough for that. I've been thinking about it, you see, and I'll soon convince you," he added, hurriedly, seeing the cloud grow deeper on Lucy's face. "I must tell you

something which I would rather not have mentioned."

"Don't tell me, if you ought not to tell me, Tom," said Lucy, whose conscience had grown more delicate than ever, both from the turning of her own face toward the light, and from the growing feeling that Tom was not to be trusted as a guide.

"There's no reason why I shouldn't," returned Tom. "It's only this—that my father is vexed with me because I wouldn't make love to your cousin Mary, and that I have let her slip out of my reach now; for, as he says, somebody will be sure to snap her up before she comes back. So it's just the worst time possible to tell him any thing unpleasant, you know. I really had far better wait till the poor girl is well out to sea, and off my father's mind; for I assure you, Lucy, it will be no joke when he does know. He's not in any mood for the news just now, I can tell you. And then my mother's away, too, and there's nobody to stand between me and him."

Lucy made no reply to this speech, uttered in the eagerness with which a man, seeking to defend a bad position, sends one weak word after another, as if the accumulation of poor arguments would make up for the lack of a good one. She sat for a long minute looking down on a spot in the carpet—the sight of which ever after was the signal for a pain-throb; then, in a hopeless tone, said, with a great sigh—

"I've done all I can."

The indefiniteness of the words frightened Thomas, and he began again to make his position good.

"I tell you what, Lucy," he said; "I give you my promise that before another month is over—that is to give my father time to get over his vexation—I will tell him all about it, and take the consequences."

Lucy sighed once more, and looked dissatisfied. But again it passed through her mind that if she were to insist farther, and refuse to see Thomas until he had complied with her just desire, she would most likely so far weaken, if not break, the bond between them, as to take from him the only influence that might yet work on him for good, and expose him entirely to such influences as she most feared. Therefore she said no more. But she could not throw the weight off her, or behave to Thomas as she had behaved hitherto. They sat silent for some time—Thomas troubled before Lucy, Lucy troubled about Thomas. Then, with another sigh, Lucy rose and went to the piano. She had never done so before when Thomas was with her, for he did not care much about her music. Now she thought of it as the only way of breaking the silence. But what should she play?

Then came into her memory a stately, sweet song her father used to sing. She did not know where he got either the words or the music of it. I know that the words are from Petrarch. Probably her father had translated them, for he had been much in Italy, and was a delicately gifted man. But whose was the music, except it was his own, I do not know. And as she sang the words, Lucy perceived for the first time how much they meant, and how they belonged to her; for in singing them she prayed both for herself and for Thomas.

I am so weary with the burden old
Of foregone faults, and power of eustom base,
That much I fear to perish from the ways,
And fall into my enemy's grim hold.
A mighty friend, to free me, though self-sold
Came, of his own ineffable high grace,
Then went, and from my vision took his face.
Him now in vain I weary to behold.
But still his voice comes echoing below:
O ye that lahor! see, here is the gate!
Come unto me—the way all open lies!
What heavenly grace will—what love—or what fate—
The glad wings of a dove on me bestow,
That I may rest, and from the earth arise? *

Her sweet tones, the earnest music, and the few phrases he could catch here and there, all had their influence upon Tom. They made him feel. And with that, as usual, he was content. Lucy herself had felt as she had never felt before, and, therefore, sung as she had never sung before. And Tom was astonished to find that her voice had such power over him, and began to wonder how it was that he had not found it out before. He went home more solemn and thoughtful than he had ever been.

Still he did nothing.

CHAPTER XXII.

A COMING EVENT.

THUS things went on for the space of about three weeks. Tom went to see Lucy almost every night, and sometimes stayed late; for his mother was still from home, and his father was careless about his hours so long as they were decent. Lucy's face continued grave, but lost a little of its trouble; for Tom often asked her to sing to him now, and she thought she was gaining more of the influence over him which she so honestly wished to possess. As the month drew toward a close, however, the look of anxiety began to deepen upon her countenance.

One evening, still and sultry, they were together as usual. Lucy was sitting at the piano, where she had just been singing, and Tom stood beside her. The evening, as the Italian poets would say, had grown brown, and Mrs. Boxall was just going to light the candles, when Tom interposed a request for continued twilight.

"Please, grannie," he said—for he too called her grannie—"do not light the candles yet. It is so sweet and dusky—just like Lucy here."

"All very well for you," said Mrs. Boxall; "but what is to become of me? My love-making was over long ago, and I want to see what I'm about now. Ah! young people, your time will come next. Make hay while the sun shines."

"While the candle's out, you mean, grannie," said Tom, stealing a kiss from Lucy.

"I hear more than you think for," said the cheery old woman. "I'll give you just five minutes' grace, and then I mean to have my own way. I am not so fond of darkness, I can tell you."

"How close it is!" said Lucy. "Will you open the window a little wider, Tom. Mind the flowers."

She came near the window, which looked down on the little stony desert of Guild Court, and sank into a high-backed chair that stood beside it.

"I can hardly drag one foot after another," she said, "I feel so oppressed and weary."

"And I," said Tom, who had taken his place

behind her, leaning on the back of her chair, "am as happy as if I were in Paradise."

"There must be thunder in the air," said Lucy. "I fancy I smell the lightning already. Oh dear!"

"Are you afraid of lightning then?" asked Thomas.

"I do not think I am exactly; but it shakes me so! I can't explain what I mean. It affects me like a false tone on the violin. No, that's not it. I can't tell what it is like."

A fierce flash broke in upon her words. Mrs. Boxall gave a scream.

"The Lord be about us from harm!" she cried.

Lucy sat trembling.

Thomas did not know how much she had to make her tremble. It is wonderful what can be seen in a single moment under an intense light. In that one flash Lucy had seen Mr. Molken and another man seated at a table, casting dice, with the eagerness of hungry fiends upon both their faces.

A few moments after the first flash, the wind began to rise, and as flash followed flash, with less and less of an interval, the wind rose till it blew a hurricane, roaring in the chimney and through the arehway as if it were a wild beast caged in Guild Court, and wanting to get out.

When the second flash came, Lucy saw that the blind of Mr. Molken's window was drawn down.

All night long the storm raved about London. Chimney-pots clashed on the opposite pavements. One crazy old house, and one yet more crazy new one, were blown down. Even the thieves and burglars retreated to their dens. But before it had reached its worst Thomas had gone home. He lay awake for some time listening to the tumult and rejoicing in it, for it roused his imagination and the delight that comes of beholding danger from a far-removed safety—a selfish pleasure, and ready to pass from a sense of our own comfort into a complacent satisfaction in the suffering of others.

Lucy lay awake for hours. There was no more lightning, but the howling of the wind tortured her—that is, drew discords from the slackened strings of the human instrument—her nerves; made "broken music in her sides." She reaped this benefit, however, that such winds always drove her to her prayers. On the wings of the wind itself, she hastened her escape "from the windy storm and tempest." When at last she fell asleep, it was to dream that another flash of lightning—when or where appearing she did not know—revealed Thomas casting dice with Molken, and then left them lapt in the darkness of a godless world. She woke weeping, fell asleep again, and dreamed that she stood in the darkness once more, and that somewhere near Thomas was casting dice with the devil for his soul, but she could neither see him nor cry to him, for the darkness choked both voice and eyes. Then a hand was laid upon her head, and she heard the words—not in her ears, but in her heart—"Be of good cheer, my daughter." It was only a dream; but I doubt if even—I must not name names, lest I should be interpreted widely from my meaning—the greatest positivist alive could have helped waking with some comfort from that dream, nay, could have helped deriving a faint satisfaction from it, if it happened to return upon him during the day. "But in no

* Petrarch's sixtieth Sonnet.

such man would such a dream arise," my reader may object. "Ah, well," I answer, because I have nothing more to say. And perhaps even in what I have written I may have been doing or hinting some wrong to some of the class. It is dreadfully difficult to be just. It is far easier to be kind than to be fair.

It was not in London or the Empire only that that storm raged that night. From all points of the compass came reports of its havoc. Whether it was the same storm, however, or another on the same night, I can not tell; but on the next morning save one, a vessel passing one of the rocky islets belonging to the Cape Verde group, found the fragments of a wreck floating on the water. The bark had parted amidships, for, on sending a boat to the island, they found her stern lying on a reef, round which little innocent waves were talking like human children. And on her stern they read her name, *Ninppo, London*. On the narrow strand they found three bodies; one, that of a young woman, vestureless and broken. They buried them as they could.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MATTIE'S ILLNESS.

THE storm of that night beat furiously against poor Mattie's window, and made a dreadful tumult in her big head. When her father went into her little room, as was his custom every morning when she did not first appear in his, he found her lying awake, with wide eyes, seemingly unaware of what was before them. Her head and her hand were both hot; and when her father at length succeeded in gaining some notice from her, the words she spoke, although in themselves intelligible enough, had reference to what she had been going through in the night, in regions far withdrawn, and conveyed to him no understanding of her condition farther than that she was *wandering*. In great alarm, he sent the charwoman (whose morning visits were Mattie's sole assistance in the house, for they always had their dinner from a neighboring cook-shop) to fetch the doctor, while he went up the court to ask Lucy to come and see her.

Lucy was tossing in a troubled dream when she woke to hear the knock at the door. Possibly the whole dream passed between the first and second summons of the book-seller, who was too anxious and eager to shrink from rousing the little household. She thought she was one of the ten virgins; but whether one of the wise or foolish she did not know. She had knocked at a door, and as it opened, her lamp went out in the wind it made. But a hand laid hold of hers in the dark, and would have drawn her into the house. Then she knew that she was holding another hand, which at first she took to be that of one of her sisters, but found to be Thomas's. She clung to it, and would have drawn him into the house with her, but she could not move him. And still the other hand kept drawing her in. She woke in an agony just as she was losing her hold of Thomas, and heard Mr. Kitley's knock. She was out of bed in a moment, put on her dressing-gown and her shoes, and ran down stairs.

On learning what was the matter, she made

haste to dress, and in a few minutes stood by Mattie's bedside. But the child did not know her. When the doctor came, he shook his head, though he was one of the most undemonstrative of his profession; and after prescribing for her, said she must be watched with the greatest care, and gave Lucy urgent directions about her treatment. Lucy resolved that she would not leave her, and began at once to make what preparations were necessary for carrying out the doctor's instructions. Mattie took the medicine he sent; and in a little while the big eyes began to close, sunk and opened again, half closed and then started wide open, to settle their long lashes at last, after many slow flutterings, upon the pale cheek below them. Then Lucy wrote a note to Mrs. Morgenstern, and left her patient to run across to her grandmother to consult with her how she should send it. But when she opened the door into the court, there was Poppie, who of course flitted the moment she saw her, but only a little way off, like a bold bird.

"Poppie, dear Poppie!" cried Lucy, earnestly, "do come here. I want you."

"Blowed if I go there again, lady!" said Poppie, without moving in either direction.

"Come here, Poppie. I won't touch you—I promise you. I wouldn't tell you a lie, Poppie," she added, seeing that she made no impression on the child.

To judge by the way Poppie came a yard nearer, she did not seem at all satisfied by the assurance.

"Look here, Poppie. There's a little girl—you know her—Mattie—she's lying very ill here, and I can't leave her. Will you take this letter for me—to that big house in Wyvil Place—to tell them I can't come to-day?"

"They'll wash me," said Poppie, decisively.

"Oh, no, they won't again, Poppie. They know now that you don't like it."

"They'll be giving me something I don't want, then. I know the sort of them."

"You needn't go into the house at all. Just ring the bell, and give the letter to the servant."

Poppie came close up to Lucy.

"I tell you what, lady: I'm not afraid of *him*. *He* won't touch me again. If he do, I'll bite worse next time. But I won't run errands for nothink. Nobody does, miss. You ain't forgotten what you gav me last time? Do it again, and I'm off."

"A good wash, Poppie—that's what I gave you last time."

"No, miss," returned the child, looking up in her face beseechingly. You know as well as me. And she held up her pretty grimy mouth, so that her meaning could not be mistaken, "Old Mother Flanagan gave me a kiss once. You remember her gin-bottle, don't you, miss?" she added, still holding up her mouth.

For a moment Lucy did hesitate, but from no yielding to the repugnance she naturally felt at dirt. She hesitated, thinking to make a stipulation on her side, for the child's good.

"I tell you what, Poppie," she said; "I will kiss you every time you come to me with a clean face, as often as you like."

Poppie's dirty face fell. She put out her hand, took the letter, turned, and went away slowly.

Lucy could not bear it. She darted after her, caught her, and kissed her. The child, without looking round, instantly scudded.

Lucy could hardly believe her eyes when, going down at Mr. Kiteley's call, some time after, she found Poppie in the shop.

"She says she wants to see you, miss," said Kiteley. "I don't know what she wants. Begging, I suppose."

And so she was. But all her begging lay in the cleanness and brightness of her countenance. She might have been a little saint but for the fact that her aureole was all in her face, and around it lay a border of darkness that might be felt.

"Back already!" said Lucy in astonishment.

"Yes, lady. I didn't bite him. I threw the letter at him, and he threw it out again; and says I, pickin' of it up, 'You'll hear o' this to-morrow, Plush.' And says he, 'Give me that letter, you wagabones.' And I threwed it at him again, and he took it up and looked at it, and took it in. And here I am, lady," added Poppie, making a display of her clean face.

Lucy kissed her once more, and she was gone in a moment.

While Mattie was asleep Lucy did all she could to change the aspect of the place.

"She shan't think of Syne the first thing when she comes to herself," she said.

With the book-seller's concurrence, who saw the reason for it the moment she uttered it, she removed all the old black volumes within sight of her bed, and replaced them with the brightest bindings to be found in the shop. She would rather have got rid of the books altogether; but there was no time for that now. Then she ventured, finding her sleep still endure, to take down the dingy old chintz curtains from her tent bed, and replace them with her own white dimity. These she then drew close round the bed, and set about cleaning the window, inside and out. Her fair hands were perfectly fit for such work, or any other labor that love chose to require of them. "Entire affection hateth nicer hands," is one of the profoundest lines in all Spenser's profound allegory. But she soon found that the light would be far too much for her little patient, especially as she had now only white curtains to screen her. So the next thing was to get a green blind for the window. Not before that was up did Mattie awake, and then only to stare about her, take her medicine, and fall asleep again, or, at least, into some state resembling sleep.

She was suffering from congestion of the brain. For a week she continued in nearly the same condition, during which time Lucy scarcely left her bedside. And it was a great help to her in her own trouble to have such a charge to fulfill.

At length one morning, when the sun was shining clear and dewy through a gap between the houses of the court, and Lucy was rising early according to her custom—she lay on a sofa in Mattie's room—the child opened her eyes and saw. Then she closed them again, and Lucy heard her murmuring to herself—

"Yes, I thought so. I'm dead. And it *is* so nice; I've got white clouds to my bed. And there's Syne cutting away with all his men—just like a black cloud—away out of the world. Ah; I see you, Syne; you ought to be ashamed of yourself for worrying of me as you've been doing all this time. You see it's no use. You ought really to give it up. He's too much for you, anyhow."

This she said brokenly and at intervals. The whole week had been filled with visions of conflict with the enemy, and the Son of Man had been with her in those visions. The spiritual struggles of them that are whole are the same in kind as those of this brain-sick child. They are tempted and driven to faithlessness, to self-indulgence, to denial of God and of his Christ, to give in—for the sake of peace, as they think. And I, believing that the very hairs of our heads are all numbered, and that not a sparrow can fall to the ground without our Father, believe that the Lord Christ—I know not how, because such knowledge is too wonderful for me—is present in the soul of such a child, as certainly as in his Church, or in the spirit of a saint who, in his name, stands against the whole world. There are two ways in which He can be present in the Church, one in the ordering of the confluence and working of men's deeds, the other in judgment; but he can be present in the weakest child's heart, in the heart of any of his disciples in an infinitely deeper way than those, and without this deeper presence, he would not care for the outside presence of the other modes. It is in the individual soul that the Spirit works, and out of which he sends forth fresh influences. And I believe that the good fight may be fought amid the wildest visions of a Saint Anthony, or even in the hardest confinement of Bedlam. It was such a fight, perhaps, that brought the maniacs of old time to the feet of the Saviour, who gave them back their right mind. Let those be thankful who have it to fight amid their brothers and sisters, who can return look for look and word for word, and not among the awful visions of a tormented brain,

"As thick and numberless

As the gay notes that people the sunbeams."

Lucy did not venture to show herself for a little while, but at length she peeped within the curtain, and saw the child praying with folded hands. Ere she could withdraw, she opened her eyes and saw her.

"I thought I was in heaven!" she said; "but I don't mind, if you're there, miss. I've been seeing you all through it. But it's over now," she added, with a sigh of relief.

"You must be very still, dear Mattie," said Lucy. "You're not well enough to talk yet."

"I am quite well, miss; only sleepy, I think." And before Lucy could answer, she was indeed asleep once more.

It was quite another fortnight before Lucy ventured to give up her place to her grandmother. During this time, she saw very little of Thomas—only for a few minutes every evening as he left the place—and somehow she found it a relief not to see more of him.

All the time of Mattie's illness, Mr. Spelt kept coming to inquire after her. He was in great concern about her, but he never asked to see her. He had a great gift in waiting, the little man. Possibly he fared the better, like Zacheus, who wanted only to see, and *was seen*. But perhaps his quietness might be partly attributed to another cause—namely, that since Mattie's illness he had brooded more upon the suspicion that his wife had had a child. I can not in the least determine whether this suspicion was a mere fancy or not; but I know that the tailor thought he had good grounds for it; and it does

not require a very lawless imagination to presume the thing possible.

Every day of those three weeks, most days more than once or twice even, Poppie was to be seen at one hour or other in Guild Court, prowling about—with a clean face, the only part of her, I am all but certain, that was clean—for the chance of seeing Lucy. From what I know of Poppie, I can not think that it was anxiety about Mattie that brought her there. I do not doubt that she was selfish—prowling about after a kiss from Lucy. And as often as Lucy saw her, she had what she wanted.

But if Lucy did not see her sometimes, at least there was one who always did see her from his nest in the—rock, I was going to say, but it was only the wall. I mean, of course, Mr. Spelt. He saw her, and watched her, until at length, as he plied his needle, the fancy which already occupied his brain began to develop itself, and he wondered whether that Poppie might not be his very lost child. Nor had the supposition lasted more than five minutes before he passionately believed, or at least passionately desired to believe it, and began to devise how to prove it, or at least to act upon it.

CHAPTER XXIV.

FISHING FOR A DAUGHTER.

MR. SPELT sat in his watch-tower, over the head of patiently cobbling Mr. Dolman, reflecting. He too was trying to cobble—things in general, in that active head of his beneath its covering of heathery hair. But he did not confine his efforts to things in general—one very particular thing had its share in the motions of his spirit—how to prove that Poppie was indeed his own child. He had missed his little Mattie much, and his child-like spirit was longing greatly after some child-like companionship. This, in Mattie's case, he had found did him good, cleared his inward sight, helped him to cobble things even when her questions showed him the need of fresh patching in many a place where he had not before perceived the rent or the thin-worn threads of the common argument or belief. And the thought had come to him that perhaps Mattie was taken away from him to teach him that he ought not, as Mattie had said with regard to Mrs. Morgenstern, to cultivate friendship only where he got good from it. The very possibility that he had a child somewhere in London, seemed at length to make it his first duty to rescue some child or other from the abyss around him, and they were not a few swimming in the vast vortex.

Having found out that Mrs. Flanagan knew more about Poppie than any one else, and that she crept oftener into the bottom of an empty cupboard in her room than any where else, he went one morning to see whether he could not learn something from the old Irishwoman. The place looked very different then from the appearance it presented to Lucy the day she found it inhabited by nobody, and furnished with nothing but the gin-bottle.

When the tailor opened the door, he found the room swarming with children. Though it was hot summer weather, a brisk fire burned in

the grate; and the place smelt strongly of *reesty* bacon. There were three different groups of children in three of the corners: one of them laying out the dead body of a terribly mutilated doll; another, the tangle-haired members of which had certainly had no share in the bacon but the smell of it, sitting listlessly on the floor, leaning their backs against the wall, apparently without hope and without God in the world; one of the third group searching for possible crumbs where she had just had her breakfast, the other two lying ill of the measles on a heap of rags. Mrs. Flanagan was in the act of pouring a little gin into her tea. The tailor was quick-eyed, and took in the most of this at a glance. But he thought he saw something more, namely, the sharp eyes of Poppie peeping through the crack of the cupboard. He therefore thought of nothing more but a hasty retreat, for Poppie must not know he came after her.

"Good-morning to you, Mrs. Flanagan," he said, with almost Irish politeness. Then, at a loss for any thing more, he ventured to add—"Don't you think, ma'am, you'll have too much on your hands if all them children takes after the two in the corner? They've got the measles, ain't they, ma'am?"

"True for you, sir," returned Mrs. Flanagan, whom the gin had soothed after the night's abstinence. "But we'll soon get rid o' the varmint," she said, rising from her seat. "Praise God the Father! we'll soon get rid o' them.—Get out wid ye!" she went on, stamping with her foot on the broken floor. "Get out! What are ye doin' i' the house when ye ought to be enjoyin' yerselves in the fresh air?—Glory be to God!—there they go as I could you. And now what'll I do for yerself this blessed mornin'?"

By this time the tailor had made up his mind to inquire after a certain Irishman for whom he had made a garment of fustian, but who had never appeared to claim it. He did not expect her to know any thing of the man, for he was considerably above Mrs. Flanagan's level, but it afforded a decent pretext. Mrs. Flanagan, however, claimed acquaintance with him, and begged that the garment in question might be delivered into her hands in order to reach him, which the tailor, having respect both to his word and his work, took care not to promise.

But as he went to his workshop, he thought what a gulf he had escaped. For suppose that Mrs. Flanagan had been communicative, and had proved to his dissatisfaction that the girl was none of his! Why, the whole remaining romance of his life would have been gone. It was far better to think that she was or might be his child, than to know that she was not. And, after all, what did it matter whether she was or was not?—thus the process of thinking went on in the tailor's brain—was she not a child? What matter whether his own or some one else's? God must have made her all the same. And if he were to find his own child at last, neglected and ignorant and vicious, could he not pray better for her if he had helped the one he could help? Might he not then say, "O Lord, they took her from me, and I had no chance with her, but I did what I could—I caught a wild thing, and I tried to make something of her, and she's none the worse for it—do Thou help my poor child, for I could not, and Thou canst. I give thee

back thine, help mine." Before he had reached his perch, he had resolved that he would make no farther inquiry whatever about Poppie, but try to get a hold of her, and do for her what he could. For whether he was her father or not, neither case could alter the facts that she was worth helping, and that it would be very hard to get a hold of her. All that Poppie could know of fathers would only make her more unwilling to be caught if she had a suspicion that Mr. Spelt laid such a claim to her; and he would therefore scheme as if their nearest common relations were "the grand old gardener and his wife," and with the care which the shy *startling* nature of Poppie, to use a Chanceryian word, rendered necessary. Tailors have time to think about things; and no circumstances are more favorable to true thought than those of any work which, employing the hands, leaves the head free. Before another day had passed Mr. Spelt had devised his bait.

The next morning came—a lovely morning for such fishing as he contemplated. Poppie appeared in the court, prowling as usual in the hope of seeing Lucy. But the tailor appeared to take no notice of her. Poppie's keen eyes went roving about as usual, wide awake to the chance of finding something. Suddenly she darted at a small object lying near the gutter, picked it up, put it in her mouth, and sucked it with evident pleasure. The tailor was as one who seeing sees not. Only he plied his needle and thread more busily, casting down sidelong glances in the drawing of the same. And there was no little triumph, for it was the triumph of confidence for the future, as well as of success for the present, in each of those glances. Suddenly Poppie ran away.

The morning after she was there again. Half involuntarily, I suppose, her eyes returned to the spot where she had found the bull's-eye. There, to the astonishment even of Poppie, who was very seldom astonished at anything, lay another—a larger one, as she saw at a glance, than the one she had found yesterday. It was in her mouth in a moment. But she gave a hurried glance round the court, and scudded at once. Like the cherub that sat aloft and saw what was going to come of it all, the little tailor drew his shortening thread, and smiled somewhere inside his impassive face, as he watched the little human butterfly, with its torn wings, lighting and flitting as in one and the same motion.

The next morning there again sat Mr. Spelt at his work—working and watching. With the queerest look of inquiry and doubtful expectation, Poppie appeared from under the archway, with her head already turned toward El Dorado—namely, the flag-stone upon which the gifts of Providence had been set forth on other mornings. There—could she, might she, believe her eyes?—lay a splendid polyhedral lump of rock, white as snow, and veined with lovely red. It was not quartz and porphyry, reader, but the most melting compound of sugar and lemon-juice that the sweet-inventing Genius—why should she not have the name of a tenth muse? Polyhedra, let us call her—had ever hatched in her brooding brain, as she bent over melting sugar or dark treacle, "in linked sweetness long drawn out." This time Poppie hesitated a little, and glanced up and around. She saw nobody but the tailor,

and he was too cunning even for her. Busy as a bee, he toiled away lightly and earnestly. Then, as if the sweetmeat had been a bird for which she was laying snares, as her would-be father was laying them for her, she took two steps nearer on tiptoe, then stopped and gazed again. It was not that she thought of stealing, any more than the birds who take what they find in the fields and on the hedges; it was only from a sort of fear that it was too good fortune for her, and that there must be something evanescent about it—wings somewhere. Or perhaps she vaguely fancied there must be some unfathomable design in it, awful and inscrutable, and therefore glanced around her once more—this time all but surprising the tailor, with uplifted head and the eager eyes of a fowler. But the temptation soon overcame any suspicion she might have. She made one bound upon the prize, and scudded as she had never scudded before. Mr. Spelt ran his needle in under the nail of his left thumb, and so overcame his delight in time to save his senses.

And now came a part of the design which Mr. Spelt regarded as a very triumph of cunning invention. That evening he drove two tiny staples of wire—one into Mr. Dolman's door-post close to the ground; the other into his own. The next morning, as soon as he arrived, he chose a thread as near the color of the flag-stones that paved the passage as he could find, fastened one end with a plug of toffee into a hole he bored with his scissors in another splendor of rock, laid the bait in the usual place, drew the long thread through the two eyes of the staples, and sat down in his lair with the end attached to the little finger of his left hand.

The time arrived about which Poppie usually appeared. Mr. Spelt got anxious—nervously anxious. She was later than usual, and he almost despaired; but at length, there she was, peeping cautiously round the corner toward the trap. She saw the bait—was now so accustomed to it, that she saw it almost without surprise. She had begun to regard it as most people regard the operations of nature—namely, as that which always was so and always will be so, and therefore has no reason in it at all. But this time a variety in the phenomenon shook the couch of habitude upon which her mind was settling itself in regard to the saccharine boulders; for just as she stooped to snatch it to herself and make it her own, away it went as if in terror of her approaching fingers—but only to the distance of half a yard or so. Eager as the tailor was—far more eager to catch Poppie than Poppie was to catch the lollypop—he could scarcely keep his countenance when he saw the blank astonishment that came over Poppie's pretty brown face. Certainly she had never seen a living lollypop, yet motion is a chief sign of life, and the lollypop certainly moved. Perhaps it would have been wiser to doubt her senses first, but Poppie had never yet found her senses in the wrong, and therefore had not learned to doubt them. Had she been a child of weak nerves, she might have recoiled for a moment from a second attempt, but instead of that she pounced upon it again so suddenly that the Archimago of the plot was unprepared. He gave his string a tug only just as she seized it, and, fortunately, the string came out of the plugged hole. Poppie held the bait,

and the fisherman drew in his line as fast as possible, that his fish might not see it.

The motions of Poppie's mind were as impossible to analyze as those of a field-mouse or hedge-sparrow. This time she began at once to gnaw the sugar, staring about her as she did so, and apparently in no hurry to go. Possibly she was mentally stunned by the marvel of the phenomenon, but I do not think so. Poppie never could be much surprised at anything. Why should any thing be surprising? To such a child every thing was interesting—nothing overwhelming. She seemed constantly shielded by the divine buckler of her own exposure and helplessness. You could have thought that God had said to her as to his people of old, "Fear not thou, O Poppie," and therefore Poppie did not fear, and found it answer. It is a terrible doctrine that would confine the tender care of the Father to those that know and acknowledge it. He carries the lambs in his bosom, and who shall say when they cease to be innocent lambs and become naughty sheep? Even then He goes into the mountains, and searches till He finds.

Not yet would the father aspirant show his craft. When he saw her stand there gnawing his innocent bait, he was sorely tempted to call, in the gentlest voice, "Poppie, dear;" but, like a fearful and wise lover, who dreads startling the maiden he loves, he must yet dig his parallels and approach with guile. He would even refine upon his own cunning. The next morning his bait had only a moral hook inside, that is, there was no string attached. But now that happened which he had all along feared. A child of the court—in which there were not more than two, I think—whom Mr. Spelt regarded, of course, as a stray interloper, for had she not enough of the good things already?—spied the sweetmeat, and, following the impulses of her depraved humanity, gobbled it up without ever saying, like heathen Cassius, "By your leave, gods." Presently after Poppie appeared, looked, stared—actually astonished now—and, with fallen face, turned and went away. Whether she or her cunning enemy overhead was the more disappointed, I will not venture to determine, but Mr. Spelt could almost have cried, "Four-and-twenty long tedious hours of needle and thread must pass before another chance would arrive—and the water so favorable, with the wind from the right quarter just clouding its surface, and the fly so taking!—it *was* hard to bear. He comforted himself, however, by falling back upon a kind of divine fatalism with which God had endowed him, saying to himself, "Well, it's all for the best,"—a phrase not by any means uncommon among people devoutly inclined; only there was this difference between most of us and Mr. Spelt, that we follow the special aphorism with a sigh, while he invariably smiled and brightened up for the next thing he had to do. To say things are all right and yet gloom does seem rather illogical in you and me, reader, does it not? Logical or illogical, it was not Spelt's way anyhow. He began to whistle, which he never did save upon such occasions when the faithful part of him set itself to conquer the faithless.

But he would try the bait without the line once more. Am I wearying my reader with the process? I would not willingly do so, of course.

But I fancy he would listen to this much about a salmon any day, so I will go on with my child. Poppie came the next morning, notwithstanding her last disappointment, found the bull's-eye, for such I think it was this time, took it, and sucked it to nothing upon the spot—did it leisurely, and kept looking about—let us hope for Lucy, and that Poppie considered a kiss a lovelier thing still than a lollypop.

The next morning Mr. Spelt tried the string again, watched it better, and by a succession of jerks, not slow movements, lest, notwithstanding the cunning of the color, she should see the string, drew her step by step in the eagerness of wonder, as well as of that appetite which is neither hunger nor thirst, and yet concerned with the same organs, but for which we have, as far as I am aware, no word, I mean the love of sweets, to the very foot of his eyrie. When she laid hold of the object desired at the door-post, he released it by a final tug against the eye of the staple. Before she could look up from securing it, another lump of rock fell at her feet. Then she did look up, and saw the smiling face of the tailor looking out (once more like an angel over a cloudy beam) over the threshold, if threshold it could properly be called, of his elevated and stairless door. She gave back a genuine whole-faced smile, and turned and scudded. The tailor's right hand shuttled with increased vigor all the rest of that day.

CHAPTER XXV.

MR. FULLER.

ONE evening Lucy was sitting as usual with Mattie, for the child had no friends but her and grannie: her only near relative was a widowed sister of her father, whom she did not like. She was scarcely so well as she had been for the last few days, and had therefore gone early to bed, and Lucy sat beside her to comfort her. By this time she had got the room quite transformed in appearance—all the books out of it, a nice clean paper up on the walls, a few colored prints from the *Illustrated London News* here and there, and, in fact, the whole made fit for the abode of a delicate and sensitive child.

"What shall I read to-night, Mattie?" she asked. For Mattie must always have something read to her out of the New Testament before she went to sleep: Mr. Spelt had inaugurated the custom.

"Oh, read about the man that sat in his Sunday clothes," said Mattie.

"I don't know that story," returned Lucy.

"I wish dear mother was here," said Mattie, with the pettishness of an invalid. "He would know what story I mean—that he would."

"Would you like to see Mr. Spelt?" suggested Lucy. "He was asking about you not an hour ago."

"Why didn't he come up then? I wonder he never comes to see me."

"I was afraid you weren't strong enough for it, Mattie. But I will run and fetch him now, if he's not gone."

"Oh, yes; do, please. I know he's not gone, for I have not heard his step yet. I always watch him out of the court when I'm in bed. He goes right under me."

Lucy went, and Mr. Spelt came gladly.

"Well, mother," said Mattie, holding out a worn little cloud of a hand, "how do you do?"

Mr. Spelt could hardly answer for emotion. He took the little hand in his, and it seemed to melt away in his grasp, till he could hardly feel it.

"Don't cry, mother. I am very happy. I do believe I've seen the last of old Syne. I feel just like the man that had got his Sunday clothes on, you know. You see what a pretty room Miss Burton has made, instead of all those ugly books that Syne was so fond of: well, my poor head feels just like this room, and I'm ready to listen to anything about Somebody. Read about the man in his Sunday clothes."

But Mr. Spelt, no less than Lucy, was puzzled as to what the child meant.

"I wish that good clergyman that talked about Somebody's burden being easy to carry, would come and see me," she said. "I know he would tell me the story. He knows all about Somebody."

"Shall I ask Mr. Potter to come and see you?" said Spelt, who had never heard of Mr. Fuller by name, or indeed any thing about him, but what Mattie had told him before she was taken ill.

"I don't mean Mr. Potter—you know well enough. He's always pottering," said the child, with a laugh.

She had not yet learned to give honor where honor is not due; or, rather, she had never been young enough to take seeming for being, or place for character. The consequence was that her manners and her modesty had suffered—not her reverence or her heart.

"I want to see the gentleman that really thinks it's all about something," she resumed.

"Do you know where he lives, Miss Burton?"

"No," answered Lucy; "but I will find out to-morrow, and ask him to come and see you."

"Well, that will be nice," returned Mattie. "Read to me, Mr. Spelt—any thing you like."

The little tailor was very shy of reading before Lucy, but Mattie would hear of nothing else, for she would neither allow Lucy to read nor yet to go away.

"Don't mind me, Mr. Spelt," said Lucy, beseechingly. "We are all friends, you know. If we belong to the Somebody Mattie speaks about, we needn't be shy of each other."

Thus encouraged, Mr. Spelt could refuse no longer. He read about the daughter of Jairus being made alive again.

"Ob, dear me!" said Mattie. "And if I had gone dead when Syne was tormenting of me, He could have come into the room, and taken me by the hand and said, 'Daughter, get up.' How strange it would be if He said, 'Daughter' to me, for then He would be my father, you know. And they say He's a king. I wonder if that's why Mr. Kately calls me *princess*. To have Mr. Kately and Somebody," she went on, musingly, "both for fathers is more than I can understand. There's something about godfathers and godmothers in the Catechism, ain't there, Miss Burton?" Then, without waiting for a reply, she went on, "I wish my father would go and hear what that nice gentleman—not Mr. Potter—has got to say about it. Miss Burton, read the hymn about blind Bartimeus, and that'll do mother good, and then I'll go to sleep."

The next day, after she came from the Morgens-terns', Lucy went to find Mr. Fuller. She had been to the week-evening service twice since Mattie began to recover, but she had no idea where Mr. Fuller lived, and the only way she could think of for finding him was to ask at the warehouses about the church. She tried one after another, but nobody even knew that there was any service there—not to say where the evening preacher lived. With its closed, tomb-like doors, and the utter ignorance of its concerns manifested by the people of the neighborhood, the great ugly building stood like some mausoleum built in honor of a custom buried beneath it, a monument of the time when men could buy and sell and worship God. So Lucy put off farther inquiry till the next week-evening service, for she had found already that Mr. Fuller had nothing to do with the Sunday services in that church.

How she wished that she could take Thomas with her the next time she went to receive Mr. Fuller's teaching! She had seen very little of Thomas, as I have said, and had been so much occupied with Mattie, that she did not even know whether he had fulfilled his promise about telling his father. I suspect, however, that she had been afraid to ask him, forboding the truth that he had in fact let his promise lapse in time, and was yet no nearer toward its half redemption in act, which was all that remained possible now. And, alas! what likelihood was there of the good seed taking good root in a heart where there was so little earth?

Finding Mr. Kately in his shop door, Lucy stopped to ask after Mattie, for she had not seen her that morning. And then she told him what she had been about, and her want of success.

"What does the child want a clergyman for?" asked Mr. Kately, with some tone of dissatisfaction. "I'm sure you're better than the whole lot of them, miss. Now I could listen to you—"

"How do you know that?" retorted Lucy, smiling; for she wanted to stop the eulogium upon herself.

"Because I've listened to you outside the door, Miss Burton, when you was a talking to Mattie inside."

"That wasn't fair, Mr. Kately."

"No more it wasn't, but it's done me no harm, nor you neither. But for them parsons!—they're neither men nor women. I beg their pardons—they *are* old wives."

"But are you sure that you know quite what you are talking about? I think there must be all sorts of them as well as of other people. I wish you would come and hear Mr. Fuller some evening with Mattie and me when she's better. You would allow that he talks sense, anyhow."

"I ain't over hopeful, miss. And to tell the truth, I don't much care. I don't think there can be much in it. It's all an affair of the priests. To get the upper hand of people they work on their fears and their superstitions. But I don't doubt some of them may succeed in taking themselves in, and so go on like the fox that had lost his tail, trying to make others cut off theirs too."

Lucy did not reply, because she had nothing at hand to say. The book-seller feared he had hurt her.

And so you couldn't find this Mr. Fuller?

Well, you leave it to me. I'll find him, and let you know in the afternoon."

"Thank you, Mr. Kately. Just tell Mattie, will you? I must run home now, but I'll come in in the afternoon to hear how you have succeeded."

About six o'clock, Lucy re-entered Mr. Kately's shop, received the necessary directions to find the "parson," ran up to tell Mattie that she was going, for the child had not come down stairs, and then set out.

To succeed she had to attend to Mr. Kately's rather minute instructions; for although the parsonage lay upon the bank of one of the main torrents of city traffic, it was withdrawn and hidden behind shops and among offices, taverns, and warehouses. After missing the most direct way, she arrived at last, through lanes and courts, much to her surprise, at the border of a green lawn on the opposite side of which rose a tree that spread fair branches across a blue sky filled with pearly light, and blotted here and there with spongy clouds that had filled themselves as full of light as they could hold. The other half of the branches of the same tree spread themselves across the inside of a gable, all that remained of a tavern that was being pulled down. The gable was variegated with the incongruous papers of many small rooms, and marked with the courses of stairs and the holes for the joists of the floors; and this dreariness was the background for the leaves of the solitary tree. On the same side was the parsonage, a long, rather low, and country-looking house, from the door of which Lucy would not have been surprised to see a troop of children burst with shouts and laughter, to tumble each other about upon the lawn, as smooth, at least, if not as green, as any of the most velvety of its kind. One side of the square was formed by a vague commonplace mass of dirty and expressionless London houses—what they might be used for no one could tell—one of them, probably, an eating-house—mere walls with holes to let in the little light that was to be had. The other side was of much the same character, only a little better; and the remaining side was formed by the long barn-like wall of the church, broken at regular intervals by the ugly windows, with their straight sides filled with parallelograms, and their half-circle heads filled with trapeziums—the ugliest window that can be made, except it be redeemed with stained glass, the window that makes the whole grand stretch of St. Paul's absolutely a pain. The church was built of brick nearly black below, but retaining in the upper part of the square tower something of its original red. All this Lucy took in at a glance as she went up to the door of the parsonage.

She was shown into a small study, where Mr. Fuller sat. She told him her name, that she had been to his week-evening service with Mattie, and that the child was ill and wanted to see him.

"Thank you very much," said Mr. Fuller. "Some of the city clergymen have so little opportunity of being useful! I am truly grateful to you for coming to me. A child in my parish is quite a godsend to me—I do not use the word irreverently—I mean it. You lighten my labor by the news. Perhaps I ought to say I am sorry she is ill. I dare say I shall be sorry when I see her. But meantime, I am very glad to be useful."

He promised to call the next day; and after a little more talk, Lucy took her leave.

Mr. Fuller was a middle-aged man, who all his conscientious years had been trying to get nearer to his brethren, moved thereto by the love he bore to the Father. The more anxious he was to come near to God, the more he felt that the high-road to God lay through the forest of humanity. And he had learned that love is not a feeling to be called up at will in the heart, but the reward as the result of an active exercise of the privileges of a neighbor.

Like the poor parson loved of Chaucer, "he waited after no pomp nor reverence;" and there was no chance of preferment coming in search of him. He was only a curate still. But the incumbent of St. Amos, an old man, with a grown-up family, almost unfit for duty, and greatly preferring his little estate in Kent to the city parsonage, left every thing to him, with much the same confidence he would have had if Mr. Fuller had been exactly the opposite of what he was, paying him enough to live upon—indeed paying him well for a curate. It was not enough to marry upon, as the phrase is, but Mr. Fuller did not mind that, for the only lady he had loved, or ever would love in that way, was dead; and all his thoughts for this life were bent upon such realizing of divine theory about human beings, and their relation to God and to each other, as might make life a truth and a gladness. It was therefore painful to him to think that he was but a city curate, a being whose thirst after the relations of his calling among his fellows reminded himself of that of the becalmed mariner, with "water, water everywhere, but water none to drink." He seemed to have nothing to do with them, nor they with him. Perhaps not one individual of the crowds that passed his church every hour in the week would be within miles of it on the Sunday; for even of those few who resided near it, most forsook the place on the day of rest, especially in the summer; and few indeed were the souls to whom he could offer the bread of life. He seemed to himself to be greatly overpaid for the work he had it in his power to do—in his own parish, that is. He had not even any poor to minister to. He made up for this by doing his best to help the clergyman of a neighboring parish, who had none but poor; but his heart at times burned within him to speak the words he loved best to speak to such as he could hope had the ears to hear them; for among the twelve people—a congregation he did not always have—that he said he preferred to the thousand, he could sometimes hardly believe that there was one who heard and understood. More of his reflections and resolutions in regard to this state of affairs, we shall fall in with by and by. Meantime, my reader will believe that this visit of Lucy gave him pleasure, and hope of usefulness. The next morning he was in Mr. Kately's shop as early as he thought the little invalid would be able to see him.

"Good-morning, sir," said Mr. Kately, brusquely. "What can I do for you this morning?"

If Mr. Fuller had begun looking at his books, Kately would have taken no notice of him. He might have stayed hours, and the book-seller would never have even put a book in his way; but he looked as if he wanted something in particular, and therefore Mr. Kately spoke.

"You have a little girl that's not well, haven't you?" returned Mr. Fuller.

"Oh! you're the gentleman she wanted to see. She's been asking ever so often whether you wasn't come yet. She's quite impatient to see you, poor lamb!"

While he spoke, Kately had drawn nearer to the curate, regarding him with projecting and slightly flushed face, and eyes that had even something of eagerness in them.

"I would have come earlier, only I thought it would be better not," said Mr. Fuller.

Mr. Kately drew yet a step nearer, with the same expression on his face.

"You won't put any nonsense into her head, will you, sir?" he said, almost pleadingly.

"Not if I know it," answered Mr. Fuller, with a smile of kind humor. "I would rather take some out of it."

"For you see," Kately went on, "that child never committed a sin in her life. It's all nonsense; and I won't have her talked to as if she was a little hell-eat."

"But you see we must go partly by what she thinks herself; and I suspect she won't say she never did any thing wrong. I don't think I ever knew a child that would. But after all, suppose you are right, and she never did any thing wrong—"

"I don't exactly say that, you know," interposed Mr. Kately, in a tone of mingled candor and defense. "I only said she hadn't committed any sins."

"And where's the difference?" asked Mr. Fuller quietly.

"Oh! you know quite well. Doing wrong, you know—why, we all do wrong sometimes. But to commit a sin, you know—I suppose that's something serious. That comes in the way of the Ten Commandments."

"I don't think your little girl would know the difference."

"But what's the use of referring to her always?"

"Just because I think she's very likely to know best. Children are wise in the affairs of their own kingdom."

"Well, I believe you're right; for she is the strangest child I ever saw. She knows more than any one would think for. Walk this way, sir. You'll find her in the back room."

"Won't you come too, and see that I don't put any nonsense into her head?"

"I must mind the shop, sir," objected Kately, seeming a little ashamed of what he had said.

Mr. Fuller nodded content, and was passing on, when he bethought himself, and stopped.

"Oh, Mr. Kately," he said, "there was just one thing I was going to say, but omitted. It was only this, that suppose you were right about your little girl, or suppose even that she had never done any thing wrong at all, she would want God all the same. And we must help each other to find him."

If Mr. Kately had any reply ready for this remark, which I doubt, Mr. Fuller did not give him time to make it, for he walked at once into the room, and found Mattie sitting alone in a half twilight, for the day was cloudy. Even the birds were oppressed, for not one of them was singing. A thrush hopped dearly about under his load of speckles, and a rose-ringed paroquet,

with a very red nose, looked ashamed of the quantity of port-wine he had drunk. The child was reading the same little old book mentioned before. She laid it down, and rose from the window-sill to meet Mr. Fuller.

"Well, how do you do, sir?" she said. "I am glad you are come."

Any other child of her age Mr. Fuller would have kissed, but there was something about Mattie that made him feel it an unfit proceeding. He shook hands with her and offered her a white carnelia.

"Thank you, sir," said Mattie, and laid the little transfiguration upon the table.

"Don't you like flowers?" asked Mr. Fuller, somewhat disappointed. "Isn't it beautiful now?"

"Well, where's the good?" answered and asked Mattie, as if she had been a Scotchwoman.

"It will be ugly before to-morrow."

"Oh, no; not if you put it in water directly."

"Will it live forever, then?" asked Mattie.

"No, only a few days."

"Well, where's the odds, then? To-morrow or next week—where's the difference? It looks dead now when you know it's dying."

"Ah!" thought Mr. Fuller, "I've got something here worth looking into." What he said was, "You dear child!"

"You don't know me yet," returned Mattie. "I'm not dear at all. I'm cross and ill-natured. And I won't be petted."

"You like the birds though, don't you?" said Mr. Fuller.

"Well, yes. Mr. Kately likes them, and I always like what he likes. But they are not quite comfortable, you know. They won't last forever, you know. One of them is dead since I was taken ill. And father meant it for Miss Burton."

"Do you like Miss Burton, then?"

"Yes I do. But she'll live forever, you know. —I'll tell you something else I like."

"What is that, my child?"

"Oh, I'm no such a child! But I'll tell you what I like. There."

And she held out the aged little volume, open at the hymn about blind Bartimeus.

"Will this live forever, then?" he asked, turning the volume over in his hand, so that its withered condition suggested itself at once to Mattie.

"Now you puzzle me," answered Mattie.

"But let me think. You know it's not the book I mean; it's the poem. Now I have it. If I know that poem by heart, and I live forever, then the poem will live forever. There!"

"Then the book's the body, and the poem the soul," said Mr. Fuller.

"One of the souls; for some things have many souls. I have two, at least."

Mr. Fuller felt instinctively, with the big forehead and the tiny body of the child before him, that they were getting on rather dangerous ground. But he must answer.

"Two souls! That must be something like what King David felt, when he asked God to join his heart into one. But do you like this poem?" he hastened to add. "May I read it to you?"

"Oh yes; please do. I am never tired of hearing it. It will sound quite new if you read it."

So Mr. Fuller read slowly—"As Jesus went into Jericho town." And from the way Mattie

listened, he knew what he must bring her next—not a camellia, but a poem. Still, how sad it was that a little child should not love flowers!

“When were you in the country last, Miss Kately?”

“I never was in the country that I know of. My name’s Mattie.”

“Wouldn’t you like to go, Mattie?”

“No I shouldn’t—not at all.”

“Why?”

“Well, because—because it’s not in my way, you see.”

“But surely you have some reason for not liking the country.”

“Well, now, I will tell you. The country, by all I can hear, is full of things that die, and I don’t like that. And I think people can’t be nice that like the country.”

Mr. Fuller resolved in his heart that he would make Mattie like the country before he had done with her. But he would say no more now, because he was not sure whether Mattie as yet regarded him with a friendly eye; and he must be a friend before he could speak about religion. He rose, therefore, and held out his hand.

Mattie looked at him with dismay

“But I wanted you to tell me about the man that sat at Somebody’s feet in his Sunday clothes.”

Happily for his farther influence with her, Mr. Fuller guessed at once whom she meant, and taking a New Testament from his pocket, read to her about the demoniac, who sat at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind. He had not known her long before he discovered that all these stories of possession had an especial attraction for Mattie—she evidently associated them with her own visions of Syne and his men.

“Well, I was wrong. It wasn’t his Sunday clothes,” she said. “Or, perhaps, it was, and he had torn the rest all to pieces.”

“Yes; I think that’s very likely,” responded Mr. Fuller.

“I know—it was Syne that told him, and he did it. But he wouldn’t do it any more, would he, after he saw Somebody?”

“I don’t think he would,” answered Mr. Fuller, understanding her just enough to know the right answer to make.—“But I will come and see you again to-morrow,” he added, “and try whether I can’t bring something with me that you will like.”

“Thank you,” answered the old-fashioned creature. “But don’t be putting yourself to any expense about it, for I am not easy to please.” And she lifted her hand to her head and gave a deep sigh, as if it was a very sad fact indeed. “I wish I was easier to please,” she added to herself—but Mr. Fuller heard her as he left the room.

“She’s a very remarkable child that, Mr. Kately—too much so, I fear,” he said, re-entering the shop.

“I know that,” returned the book-seller curtly, almost angrily. “I wish she wasn’t.”

“I beg your pardon. I only wanted—”

“No occasion at all,” interrupted Mr. Kately.

“I only wanted,” Mr. Fuller persisted, “to ask you whether you do not think she had better go out of town for a while.”

“I dare say. But how am I to send her? The child has not a relation but me—and an aunt she can’t a-bear; and that wouldn’t do—

would it, sir? She would fret herself to death without some one she cared about.”

“Certainly it wouldn’t do. But mightn’t Miss—I forget her name—”

“Miss Burton, I dare say you mean.”

“I mean Miss Burton. Couldn’t she help you? Is she any relation of yours?”

“None whatever. Nor she’s not like it. I believe she’s a stray, myself.”

“What do you mean, Mr. Kately?” asked Mr. Fuller, quite bewildered now.

“Well, sir, I mean that she’s a stray angel,” answered Mr. Kately, smiling; “for she ain’t like any one else I know of but that child’s mother, and she’s gone back to where she came from—many’s the long year.”

“I don’t wonder at your thinking that of her if she’s as good as she looks,” returned Mr. Fuller. And bidding the book-seller good-morning, he left the shop and walked home, cogitating how the child could be got into the country.

Next morning he called—earlier, and saw Lucy leaving the court just as he was going into the shop. He turned and spoke to her.

“Fancy a child, Miss Burton,” he said, “that does not care about flowers—and her heart full of religion too! How is she to consider the lilies of the field? She knows only birds in cages; she has no idea of the birds of the air. The poor child has to lift every thing out of that deep soul of hers, and the buckets of her brain can’t stand such hard work.”

“I know, I know,” answered Lucy. “But what can I do?”

“Besides,” Mr. Fuller continued, “what notion of the simple grandeur of God can she have when she never had more than a peep of the sky from between these wretched houses? How can the heavens declare the glory of God to her? You don’t suppose David understood astronomy, and that it was from a scientific point of view that he spoke, when he said that the firmament showed his handiwork? That was all he could say about it, for the Jewish nation was not yet able to produce a Ruskin. But it was, nevertheless, the spiritual power of the sky upon his soul—not the stars in their courses, but the stars up there in their reposeful depth of blue, their ‘shining nest’—which, whatever theory of their construction he might have, yet impressed him with an awe, an infinitude, a shrinking and yet aspiring—made his heart swell within him, and sent him down on his knees. This little darling knows nothing of such an experience. We must get her into the open. She must love the wind that bloweth where it listeth, and the clouds that change and pass. She can’t even like any thing that does not last forever; and the mind needs a perishing bread sometimes as well as the body—though it never perishes when once made use of, as Mattie told me yesterday. But I beg your pardon; I am preaching a sermon, I think. What a thing it is to have the faults of a profession in addition to those of humanity! It all comes to this—you must get that child, with her big head and her big conscience, out of London, and give her heart a chance.”

“Indeed, I wish I could,” answered Lucy. “I will do what I can, and let you know. Are you going to see her now, Mr. Fuller?”

“Yes, I am. I took her a flower yesterday, but I have brought her a poem to-day. I am

afraid, however, that it is not quite the thing for her. I thought I could easily find her one till I began to try, and then I found it very difficult indeed."

They parted—Lucy to Mrs. Morgenstern's, Mr. Fuller to Mattie.

I will give the hymn—for the sake, in part, of what Mattie said, and then I will close the chapter.

"Come unto me," the Master says.

But how? I am not good;
No thankful song my heart will raise,
Nor even wish it could.

I am not sorry for the past,
Nor able not to sin;
The weary strife would ever last
If once I should begin.

Hast thou no burden then to bear?
No action to repent?
Is all around so very fair?
Is thy heart quite content?

Hast thou no sickness in thy soul?
No labor to endure?
Then go in peace, for thou art whole,
Thou needest not His cure.

Ah! mock me not. Sometimes I sigh;
I have a nameless grief,
A faint sad pain—but such that I
Can look for no relief.

Come then to Him who made thy heart;
Come in thyself distrust;
To come to Jesus is thy part,
His part to give thee rest.

New grief, new hope He will bestow,
Thy grief and pain to quell;
Into thy heart Himself will go,
And that will make thee well.

When Mr. Fuller had finished the hymn, he closed the book and looked toward Mattie. She responded—with a sigh—

"Well, I think I know what it means. You see I have such a big head, and so many things come and go just as they please, that if it weren't for Somebody I don't know what I should do with them all. But as soon as I think about Him, they grow quieter and behave better. But I don't know all that it means. Will you lend me the book, Mr. Fuller?"

All the child's thoughts took shapes, and so she talked like a lunatic. Still, as all the forms to which she gave an objective existence were the embodiments of spiritual realities, she could not be said to have yet passed the narrow line that divides the poet from the maniac. But it was high time that the subjects of her thoughts should be supplied from without, and that the generating power should lie dormant for a while. And the opportunity for this arrived sooner than her friends had expected.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE NINGPO IS LOST.

LUCY was so full of Mattie and what Mr. Fuller had said that she told Mrs. Morgenstern all about it before Miriam had her lesson. After the lesson was over, Mrs. Morgenstern, who had, contrary to her custom, remained in the room all the time, said—

"Well, Lucy, I have been thinking about it, and I think I have arranged it all very nicely. It's clear to me that the child will go out of her mind if she goes on as she's doing. Now, I don't

think Miriam has been quite so well as usual, and she has not been out of London since last August. Couldn't you take her down to St. Leonard's—or I dare say you would like Hastings better? You can go on with your lessons there all the same, and take little Mattie with you."

"But what will become of my grandmother?" said Lucy.

"She can go with you, can't she? I could ask her to go and take care of you. It would be much better for you to have her, and it makes very little difference to me, you know."

"Thank you very much," returned Lucy, "but I fear my grandmother will not consent to it. I will try her, however, and see what can be done. Thank you a thousand times, dear Mrs. Morgenstern. Wouldn't you like to go to Hastings, Miriam?"

Miriam was delighted at the thought of it, and Lucy was not without hopes that if her grandmother would not consent to go herself, she would at least wish her to go. Leaving Mattie out of view, she would be glad to be away from Thomas for a while, for, until he had done as he ought, she could not feel happy in his presence; and she made up her mind that she would write to him very plainly when she was away—perhaps tell him positively that if he would not end it, she must. I say *perhaps*, for ever as she approached the resolution, the idea of the poor lad's helpless desertion arose before her, and she recoiled from abandoning him. Nothing more could be determined, however, until she saw her grandmother.

But as she was going out she met Mr. Sargent in the hall. He had come to see her.

This very morning the last breath of the crew and passengers of the *Ningpo* had bubbled up in the newspapers; and all the world who cared to know it knew the fact, that the vessel had been dashed to pieces upon a rock of the Cape Verde Islands; all hands and passengers supposed to be lost. This the underwriters knew a few hours before. Now it was known to Mr. Stopper and Mr. Worboise, both of whom it concerned even more than the underwriters. Mr. Stopper's first feeling was one of dismay, for the articles of partnership had not been completed before Mr. Boxall sailed. Still as he was the only person who understood the business, he trusted in any case to make his position good, especially if he was right in imagining that old Mrs. Boxall must now be heir-at-law—a supposition which he scarcely allowed himself to doubt. Here, however, occurred the thought of Thomas. He had influence there, and that influence would be against him, for had he not insulted him? This he could not help yet. He would wait for what might turn up.

What Mr. Worboise's feelings were when first he read the paragraph in the paper I do not know, nor whether he had not an emotion of justice, and an inclination to share the property with Mrs. Boxall. But I doubt whether he very clearly recognized the existence of his friend's mother. In his mind probably her subjective being was thinned by age, little regard, and dependence, into a thing of no account—a shadow of the non-Elysian sort, living only in the waste places of human disregard. He certainly knew nothing of her right to any property in the possession of her son. Of one of his feelings only am

I sure : he became more ambitious for his son, in whom he had a considerable amount of the pride of paternity.

Mrs. Boxall was the last to hear any thing of the matter. She did not read the newspapers, and, accustomed to have sons at sea, had not even begun to look for news of the *Ningpo*.

"Ah, Miss Burton," said Mr. Sargent, "I am just in time. I thought perhaps you would not be gone yet. Will you come into the garden with me for a few minutes? I won't keep you long."

Lucy hesitated. Mr. Sargent had, of late, on several occasions, been more confidential in his manner than was quite pleasant to her, because, with the keenest dislike to false appearances, she yet could not take his attentions for granted, and tell him she was engaged to Thomas. He saw her hesitation, and hastened to remove it.

"I only want to ask you about a matter of business," he said. "I assure you I won't detain you."

Mr. Sargent knew something of Mr. Wither, who had very "good connections," and was indeed a favorite in several professional circles; and from him he had learned all about Lucy's relations, without even alluding to Lucy herself, and that her uncle and whole family had sailed in the *Ningpo*. Anxious to do what he could for her, and fearful lest, in their unprotected condition, some advantage should be taken of the two women, he had made haste to offer his services to Lucy, not without a vague feeling that he ran great risk of putting himself in the false position of a fortune-hunter by doing so, and heartily abusing himself for not having made more definite advances before there was any danger of her becoming an heiress; for although a fortune was a most desirable thing in Mr. Sargent's position, especially if he wished to marry, he was above marrying for money alone, and in the case of Lucy, with whom he had fallen in love—just within his depth, it must be confessed—while she was as poor as himself, he was especially jealous of being unjustly supposed to be in pursuit of her prospects. Possibly the consciousness of what a help the fortune would be to him, made him even more sensitive than he would otherwise have been. Still he would not omit the opportunity of being useful to the girl, trusting that his honesty would, despite of appearances, manifest itself sufficiently to be believed in by so honest a nature as Lucy Burton.

"Have you heard the sad news?" he said, as soon as they were in the garden.

"No," answered Lucy, without much concern; for she did not expect to hear any thing about Thomas.

"I thought not. It is very sad. The *Ningpo* is lost."

Lucy was perplexed. She knew the name of her uncle's vessel; but for a moment she did not associate the thing. In a moment, however, something of the horror of the fact reached her. She did not cry, for her affections had no great part in any one on board of the vessel, but she turned very pale. And not a thought of the possible interest she might have in the matter crossed her mind. She had never associated good to herself with her uncle or any of his family.

"How dreadful!" she murmured. "My poor cousins! What they must all have gone through! Are they come home?"

"They are gone home," said Mr. Sargent, significantly. "There can be but little doubt of that, I fear."

"You don't mean they're drowned?" she said, turning her white face on him, and opening her eyes wide.

"It is not absolutely certain; but there can be little doubt about it."

He did not show her the paragraph in the *Times*, though the paper was in his pocket: the particulars were too dreadful.

"Are there any other relations but your grandmother and yourself?" he asked, for Lucy remained silent.

"I don't know of any," she answered.

"Then you must come in for the property."

"Oh, no. He would never leave it to us. He didn't like me, for one thing. But that was my fault, perhaps. He was not overkind to my mother, and so I never liked him."

And here at length she burst into tears. She wept very quietly, however, and Mr. Sargent went on.

"But you must be his heirs-at-law. Will you allow me to make inquiry—to do any thing that may be necessary, for you? Don't misunderstand me," he added, pleadingly. "It is only as a friend—what I have been for a long time now, Lucy."

Lucy scarcely hesitated before she answered, with a restraint that appeared like coldness—

"Thank you, Mr. Sargent. The business can not in any case be mine. It is my grandmother's, and I can, and will, take no hand in it."

"Will you say to your grandmother that I am at her service?"

"If it were a business matter, there is no one I would more willingly—ask to help us; but as you say it is a matter of friendship, I must refuse your kindness."

Mr. Sargent was vexed with himself, and disappointed with her. He supposed that she misinterpreted his motives. Between the two, he was driven to a sudden unresolved action of appeal.

"Miss Burton," he said, "for God's sake, do not misunderstand me, and attribute to mercenary motives the offer I make only in the confidence that you will not do me such an injustice."

Lucy was greatly distressed. Her color went and came for a few moments, and then she spoke.

"Mr. Sargent, I am just as anxious that you should understand me; but I am in a great difficulty, and have to throw myself on your generosity."

She paused again, astonished to find herself making a speech. But she did not pause long.

"I refuse your kindness," she said, "only because I am not free to lay myself under such obligation to you. Do not ask me to say more," she added, finding that he made no reply.

But if she had looked in his face, she would have seen that he understood her perfectly. Honest disappointment and manly suffering were visible enough on his countenance. But he did not grow ashy pale, as some lovers would at such an utterance. He would never have made, under any circumstances, a passionate lover, though an honest and true one; for he was one of those balanced natures which are never all in one thing at once. Hence the very moment he received a shock was the moment in which he began to

struggle for victory. Something called to him, as Una to the Red-Cross Knight when face to face with the serpent Error—

“Strangle her, else she sure will strangle thee.”

Before Lucy's eyes and his met, he had mastered his countenance at last.

“I understand you, Miss Burton,” he said, in a calm voice, which only trembled a little—and it was then that Lucy ventured to look at him—“and I thank you. Please to remember that if ever you need a friend, I am at your service.”

Without another word, he lifted his hat and went away.

Lucy hastened home full of distress at the thought of her grandmother's grief, and thinking all the way how she could convey the news with least of a shock; but when she entered the room, she found her already in tears, and Mr. Stopper seated by her side comforting her with common-places.

CHAPTER XXVII.

OF USEFUL ODDS AND ENDS.

DURING all this time, when his visits to Lucy were so much interrupted by her attendance upon Mattie, Thomas had not been doing well. In fact, he had been doing gradually worse. His mother had, of course, been at home for a long time now, and Mr. Simon's visits had been resumed. But neither of these circumstances tended to draw him homeward.

Mrs. Worboise's health was so much improved by her sojourn at Folkestone, that she now meditated more energetic measures for the conversion of her son. What these measures should be, however, she could not for some time determine. At length she resolved that, as he had been a good scholar when at school—proved in her eyes by his having brought home prizes every year—she would ask him to bring his Greek Testament to her room, and help her to read through St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans with the fresh light which his scholarship would cast upon the page. It was not that she was in the least difficulty about the Apostle's meaning. She knew that as well at least as the Apostle himself; but she would invent an innocent trap to catch a soul with, and, if so it might be, put it in a safe cage, whose strong wires of exclusion should be wadded with the pleasant cotton of safety. Alas for St. Paul, his mighty soul, and his laboring speech, in the hands of two such! The very idea of such to read him, might have scared him from his epistle—if such readers there could have been in a time when the wild beasts of the amphitheatre kept the Christianity pure.

“Thomas,” she said, one evening, “I want you to bring your Greek Testament, and help me out with something.”

“O, mother, I can't. I have forgotten all about Greek. What is it you want to know?”

“I want you to read the Romans with me.”

“Oh! really, mother, I can't. It's such bad Greek, you know!”

“Thomas!” said his mother, sepulchrally, as if his hasty assertion with regard to St. Paul's scholarship had been a sin against the truth St. Paul spoke.

“Well, really, mother, you must excuse me. I can't. Why don't you ask Mr. Simon? He's an Oxford man.”

To this Mrs. Worboise had no answer immediately at hand. From the way in which Thomas met her request, my reader will see that he was breaking loose from her authority—whether for the better or the worse does not at this point seem doubtful, and yet perhaps it was doubtful. Still he was not prepared to brave her and his father with a confession, for such it appeared to him to be, of his attachment to Lucy.

Since he could see so little of her, he had spent almost all the time that used to be devoted to her with Molken. In consequence, he seldom reached home in any thing like what he had been accustomed to consider decent time. When his mother spoke to him on the subject he shoved it aside with an “Ah! you were in bed, mother,” prefaceing some story, part true, part false, arranged for the occasion. So long as his father took no notice of the matter he did not much mind. He was afraid of him still; but so long as he was out of bed early enough in the morning, his father did not much care at what hour he went to it: he had had his own wild oats to sow in his time. The purity of his boy's mind and body did not trouble him much, provided that, when he came to take his position in the machine of things, he turned out a steady, respectable pinion, whose cogs did not miss, but held—the one till the other caught. He had, however, grown ambitious for him within the last few days—more of which by and by.

In the vacancy of mind occasioned by the loss of his visits to Lucy—for he had never entered heartily into any healthy pursuits in literature, art, or even amusement—Thomas had, as it were, gradually sauntered more and more into the power of Mr. Molken; and although he had vowed to himself, after his first experience, that he would never play again, himself not being to himself a very awe-inspiring authority, he had easily broken that vow. It was not that he had any very strong inclination to play—the demon of play had not yet quite entered into him: it was only that whatever lord asserted dominion over Thomas, to him Thomas was ready to yield that which he claimed. Molken said, “Come along,” and Thomas went along. Nor was it always to the gambling-house that he followed Molken; but although there was one most degrading species of vice from which his love to Lucy—for he loved Lucy with a real though not great love—did preserve him, there were several places to which his friend took him from which he could scarcely emerge as pure as he entered them. I suspect—thanks to what influence Lucy had with him, to what conscience he had left in him, to what good his mother and Mr. Simon had taught him, in a word, to the care of God over him—Mr. Molken found him rather harder to corrupt than, from his shilly-shally ways, he had expected. Above all, the love of woman, next to the love of God, is the power of God to a young man's salvation; for all is of God, every thing, from first to last—nature, providence, and grace—it is all of our Father in Heaven; and what God hath joined let not man put asunder.

His gambling was a very trifle as far as money went: an affair of all but life and death as far as principle was concerned. There is nothing

like the amount of in-door gambling that there used to be; but there is no great improvement in taking it to the downs and the open air, and making it librate on the muscles of horses instead of on the spinning power of a top or the turning up of cards. And whoever gambles, whether at *rouge-et-noir* or at *Fly-away versus Staywell*, will find that the laws of gambling are, like those of the universe, unalterable. The laws of gambling are discontent, confusion, and loss upon every one who seeks to make money without giving money's worth. It will matter little to the grumbler whether the retribution comes in this world, he thinking, like Macbeth, to "skip the life to come," or in the next. He will find that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

But for Thomas, the worst thing in the gambling, besides the bad company it led him into, was that the whole affair fell in so with his natural weakness. Gambling is the employment fitted for the man without principles and without will, for his whole being is but, as far as he is concerned, the roulette-ball of chance. The wise, on the contrary, do not believe in Fortune, yield nothing to her sway, go on their own fixed path regardless "of her that turneth as a ball," as Chaucer says. They at least will be steady, come to them what may. Thomas got gradually weaker and weaker, and had it not been for Lucy, would soon have fallen utterly. But she, like the lady of an absent lord, still kept one fortress for him in a yielded and devastated country.

There was no newspaper taken in at Mr. Worboise's, for he always left home for his office as soon as possible. So, when Thomas reached the counting-house, he had heard nothing of the sad news about his late master and his family. But the moment he entered the place he felt that the atmosphere was clouded. Mr. Wither, whose face was pale as death, rose from the desk where he had been sitting, caught up his hat, and went out. Thomas could not help suspecting that his entrance was the cause of Mr. Wither's departure, and his thoughts went back to last night, and he wondered whether his fellow-clerks would cut him because of the company he had been in. His conscience could be more easily pricked by the apprehension of overt disapprobation than by any other good. None of them took any particular notice of him; only a gloom as of a funeral hung about all their faces, and radiated from them so as to make the whole place look sepulchral. Mr. Stopper was sitting within the glass partition, whence he called for Mr. Worboise, who obeyed with a bad grace, as anticipating something disagreeable.

"There!" said Mr. Stopper, handing him the newspaper, and watching him as he read.

Thomas read, returned the paper, murmured something, and went back with scared face to the outer room. There a conversation arose in a low voice, as if it had been in the presence of the dead. Various questions were asked and conjectures hazarded, but nobody knew any thing. Thomas's place was opposite the glass, and before he had been long seated he saw Mr. Stopper take the key of the door of communication from a drawer, unlock the door, and with the *Times* in his hand walk into Mrs. Boxall's house, closing the door behind him. This movement was easy

to understand, and set Thomas thinking. Then first the thought struck him that Lucy and her grandmother would come in for all the property. This sent a glow of pleasure through him, and he had enough ado to keep the funeral look which belonged to the occasion. Now he need not fear to tell his father the fact of his engagement—indeed he might delay the news as long as he liked, sure that it would be welcome when it came. If his father were pleased, he did not care so much for his mother. But had he known how much she loved him, he could not have got so far away from her as he was now. If, on the other hand, he had fallen in with her way of things, she would have poured out upon him so much repressed affection that he would have known it. But till he saw as she saw, felt as she felt, and could talk as she talked, her motherhood saw an impervious barrier between her and him—a barrier she labored hard to remove, but with tools that could make no passage through an ever-closing mist.

I can not help thinking that if he had told all now, the knowledge of his relation to Lucy would have been welcomed by his father, and would have set every thing right. I can not but believe that Mr. Worboise's mind was troubled about the property. With perfect law on his side, there was yet that against him which all his worldliness did not quite enable him to meet with coolness. But the longer the idea of the property rested upon his mind, the more, as if it had been the red-hot coin of the devil's gift, it burned and burrowed out a nest for itself, till it lay there stone-cold and immovably fixed, and not to be got rid of. Before many weeks had passed he not only knew that it was his by law, but felt that it was his by right—his own by right of possession, and the clinging of his heart-strings around it—his own because it was so good that he could not part with it. Still it was possible that something adverse might turn up, and there was no good in incurring odium until he was absolutely sure that the fortune as well as the odium would be his; therefore he was in no haste to propound the will.

But, as I have said, he began to be more ambitious for his son, and the more he thought about the property, the more he desired to increase it by the advantageous alliance which he had now no doubt he could command. This persuasion was increased by the satisfaction which his son's handsome person and pleasing manners afforded him; and a confidence of manner which had of late shown itself, chiefly, it must be confessed, from the experience of the world he had had in the company he of late frequented, had raised in his father's mind a certain regard for him which he had not felt before. Therefore he began to look about him and speculate. He had not the slightest suspicion of Thomas being in love; and, indeed, there was nothing in his conduct or appearance that could have aroused such a suspicion in his mind. Mr. Worboise believed, on the contrary, that his son was leading a rather wild life.

It may seem strange that Thomas should not by this time have sunk far deeper into the abyss of misery; but Molken had been careful in not trying to hook him while he was only nibbling; and, besides, until he happened to be able to lose something worth winning, he rather avoided running him into any scrape that might dis-

gust him without bringing any considerable advantage to himself.

There was one adverse intelligence, of whom Mr. Worboise knew nothing, and who knew nothing of Mr. Worboise, ready to pounce upon him the moment he showed his game. This was Mr. Sargent. Smarting, not under Lucy's refusal so much as from the lingering suspicion that she had altogether misinterpreted his motives, he watched for an opportunity of proving his disinterestedness: this was his only hope; for he saw that Lucy was lost to him. He well knew that in the position of her and her grandmother, it would not be surprising if something with a forked tongue or a cloven foot should put its head out of a hole before very long, and begin to creep toward them; and therefore, as I say, he kept an indefinite but wide watch, in the hope which I have mentioned. He had no great difficulty in discovering that Mr. Worboise had been Mr. Boxall's man of business, but he had no right to communicate with him on the subject. This indeed Mr. Stopper, who had taken the place of adviser in general to Mrs. Boxall, had already done, asking him whether Mr. Boxall had left no will, to which he had received a reply only to the effect that it was early days, that there was no proof of his death, and that he was prepared to give what evidence he possessed at the proper time—an answer Mrs. Boxall naturally enough, with her fiery disposition, considered less than courteous. Of this Mr. Sargent of course was not aware, but as the only thing he could do at present, he entered a caveat in the Court of Probate.

Mr. Stopper did his best for the business in the hope of one day having not only the entire management as now, but an unquestionable as unquestioned right to the same. If he ever thought of any thing farther since he had now a free entrance to Mrs. Boxall's region, he could not think an inch in that direction without encountering the idea of Thomas.

It was very disagreeable to Thomas that Mr. Stopper, whom he detested, should have this free admission to what he had been accustomed to regard as his *peculium*. He felt as if the place were defiled by his presence, and to sit as he had sometimes to sit, knowing that Mr. Stopper was overhead, was absolutely hateful. But, as I shall have to set forth in the next chapter, Lucy was not at home; and that mitigated the matter very considerably. For the rest Mr. Stopper was on the whole more civil to Thomas than he had hitherto been, and appeared even to put a little more confidence in him than formerly. The fact was that the insecurity of his position made him conscious of vulnerability, and he wished to be friendly on all sides, with a vague general feeling of strengthening his outworks.

Mr. Wither never opened his mouth to Thomas upon any occasion or necessity, and from several symptoms it appeared that his grief, or rather perhaps the antidotes to it, were dragging him down hill.

Amy Worboise was not at home. The mother had seen symptoms; and much as she valued Mr. Simon's ghostly ministrations, the old Adam in her rebelled too strongly against having a curate for her son-in-law. So Amy disappeared for a season, upon a convenient invitation. But if she had been at home, she could have in-

fluenced events in nothing, for, as often happens in families, there was no real communication between brother and sister.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

MATTIE IN THE COUNTRY.

I now return to resume the regular thread of my story.

I do not know if my reader is half as much interested in Mattie as I am. I doubt it very much. He will, most probably, like Poppie better. But big-headed, strange, and conceited as Mattie was, she was altogether a higher being than Poppie. She thought; Poppie only received impressions. If she had more serious faults than Poppie, they were faults that belonged to a more advanced stage of growth; diseased, my reader may say, but diseased with a disease that fell in with, almost belonged to, the untimely development. All Poppie's thoughts, to speak roughly, came from without; all Mattie's from within. To complete Mattie, she had to go back a little, and learn to receive impressions too; to complete Poppie, she had to work upon the impressions she received, and, so to speak, generate thoughts of her own. Mattie led the life of a human being; Poppie of a human animal. Mattie lived; Poppie was there. Poppie was the type of most people; Mattie of the elect.

Lucy did not intend, in the sad circumstances in which she now was, to say a word to her grandmother about Mrs. Morgenstern's proposal. But it was brought about very naturally. As she entered the court, she met Mattie. The child had been once more to visit Mr. Spelt, but had found the little nest so oppressive that she had begged to be put down again, that she might go to her own room. Mr. Spelt was leaning over his door and his crossed legs, for he could not stand up, looking anxiously after her; and the child's face was so pale and sad, and she held her little hand so pitifully to her big head, that Lucy could not help feeling that the first necessity among her duties was to get Mattie away.

After the fresh burst of her grandmother's grief at sight of her was over, after Mr. Stopper had gone back to the counting-house, and she had fallen into a silent rocking to and fro, Lucy ventured to speak.

"They're gone home, dear grannie," she said.

"And I shan't stay long behind them, my dear," grannie moaned.

"That's some comfort, isn't it, grannie?" said Lucy, for her own heart was heavy, not for the dead, but for the living; heavy for her own troubles, heavy for Thomas, about whom she felt very despondent, almost despairing.

"Ah! you young people would be glad enough to have the old ones out of the way," returned Mrs. Boxall, in the petulance of grief. "Have patience, Lucy, have patience, child; it won't be long, and then you can do as you like."

"Oh, grannie, grannie!" cried Lucy, bursting into tears. "I do every thing I like now. I only wanted to comfort you," she sobbed. "I thought you would like to go too. I wish I was dead."

"You, child!" exclaimed Mrs. Boxall; "why should you wish you was dead? You don't know enough of life to wish for death." Then, as Lucy went on sobbing, her tone changed—for she began to be concerned at her distress. "What is the matter with my darling?" she said. "Are you ill, Lucy?"

Then Lucy went to her and kissed her, and knelt down, and laid her head in the old woman's lap. And her grannie stroked her hair, and spoke to her as if she had been one of her own babies, and, in seeking to comfort her, forgot her own troubles for the moment.

"You've been doing too much for other people, Lucy," she said. "We must think of you now. You must go to the sea-side for a while. You shan't go about giving lessons any more, my lamb. There is no need for that any more, for they say all the money will be ours now."

And the old woman wept again at the thought of the source of their coming prosperity.

"I should like to go to the country very much, if you would go too, grannie."

"No, no, child, I don't want to go. I don't want any doing good to."

"But I don't like to leave you, grannie," objected Lucy.

"Never mind me, my dear. I shall be better alone for a while. And I dare say there will be some business to attend to."

And so they went on talking, till Lucy told her all about Mrs. Morgenstern's plan, and how ill poor Mattie looked, and that she would be glad to go away for a little while herself. Mrs. Boxall would not consent to go, but she even urged Lucy to accept the proposed arrangement, and proceeded at once to inquire into her wardrobe, and talk about mourning.

Two days after, Lucy and Mattie met Mrs. Morgenstern and Miriam at the London Bridge railway station. Mattie looked quite dazed, almost stupid, with the noise and bustle; but when they were once in motion, she heaved a deep sigh, and looked comforted. She said nothing, however, for some time, and her countenance revealed no surprise. Whatever was out of the usual way always oppressed Mattie—not excited her; and, therefore, the more surprising any thing was, the less did it occasion any outward shape of surprise. But as they flashed into the first tunnel, Lucy saw her start and shudder ere they vanished from each other in the darkness. She put out her hand and took hold of the child's. It was cold and trembling; but as she held it gently and warmly in her own, it grew quite still. By the time the light began to grow again, her face was peaceful, and when they emerged in the cutting beyond, she was calm enough to speak the thought that had come to her in the dark. With another sigh—

"I knew the country wasn't nice," she said.

"But you don't know what the country is yet," answered Lucy.

"I know quite enough of it," returned Mattie. "I like London best. I wish I could see some shops."

Lucy did not proceed to argue the matter with her. She did not tell her how unfair she was to judge the country by what lay between her and it. As well might she have argued with Thomas that the bitterness of the repentance from which he shrank was not the religion to which she

wanted to lead him; that religion itself was to him inconceivable, and could but be known when he was in it. She had tried this plan with him in their last interview before she left. She had herself, under the earnest teaching of Mr. Fuller, and in the illumination of that Spirit for which she prayed, learned many a spiritual lesson, had sought eagerly, and therefore gained rapidly. For hers was one of the good soils, well prepared beforehand for the seed of the redeeming truth of God's love, and the Sonship of Christ, and his present power in the human soul. And she had tried, I say, to make Thomas believe in the blessedness of the man whose iniquities are pardoned, whose sins are covered, to whom the Lord imputeth not his transgressions; but Thomas had replied only with some of the stock phrases of assent. A nature such as his could not think of law and obedience save as restraint. While he would be glad enough to have the weight of conscious wrong-doing lifted off him, he could not see that in yielding his own way and taking God's lay the only freedom of which the human being, made in the image of God, is capable.

Presently Mattie found another argument upon her side, that is, the town-side of the question. She had been sitting for half an hour watching the breath of the snorting engine, as it rushed out for a stormy flight over the meek fields, faltered, lingered, faded, melted, was gone.

"I told you so," said Mattie; "nothing lasts in the country."

"What are you looking at now?" asked Lucy, bending forward to see.

"Those white clouds," answered Mattie. "I've been expecting them to do something for ever so long. And they never do any thing, though they begin in such a hurry. The green gets the better of them somehow. They melt away into it, and are all gone."

"But they do the grass some good, I dare say," returned Lucy—"in hot weather like this especially."

"Well, that's not what they set out for, anyhow," said Mattie. "They look always as if they were just going to take grand shapes, and make themselves up into an army, and go out and conquer the world."

"And then," suggested Lucy, yielding to the fancy of the child, "they think better of it, and give themselves up, and die into the world to do it good, instead of trampling it under their feet and hurting it."

"But how do they come to change their minds so soon?" asked Mattie, beginning to smile; for this was the sort of intellectual duel in which her little soul delighted.

"Oh, I don't think they do change their minds. I don't think they ever meant to trample down the world. That was your notion, you know, Mattie."

"Well, what do you think they set out for? Why do they rush out so fiercely all at once?"

"I will tell you what I think," answered Lucy, without perceiving more than the faintest glimmering of the human reality of what she said. "I think they rush out of the hot place in which they are got ready to do the fields good, in so much pain, that they toss themselves about in strange ways, and people think they are fierce and angry when they are only suffering—shot

out into the air from a boiling kettle, you know, Mattie."

"Ah! yes; I see," answered Mattie. "That's it, is it? Yes, I dare say. Out of a kettle?"

Miriam had drawn near, and was listening, but she could make little of all this, for her hour was not yet come to ask, or to understand such questions.

"Yes, that great round thing in front of us is just a great kettle," said Lucy.

"Well, I will look at it when we get out. I thought there wasn't much in the country. I suppose we shall get out again, though. This isn't all the country, is it?"

Before they reached Hastings, Mattie was fast asleep. It was the evening. She scarcely woke when they stopped for the last time. Lucy carried her from the carriage to a cab, and when they arrived at the lodgings where they were expected, made all haste to get her to bed and asleep.

But she woke the earlier in the morning, and the first thing she was aware of was the crowing of a very clear-throated cock, such a cock as Henry Vaughan must have listened to in the morning of the day when he wrote

"Father of lights! what sunnie seed,
What glance of day hast thou confined
Into this bird? To all the breed
This busie Ray thou hast assigned;
Their magnetisme works all night,
And dreams of Paradise and light."

She could not collect her thoughts for some time. She was aware that a change had taken place, but what was it? Was she somebody else? What did they use to call her? Then she remembered Mr. Spelt's shop, and knew that she was Mattie Kitley. What then had happened to her? Something certainly had happened, else how could the cock crow like that? She was now aware that her eyes were open, but she did not know that Lucy was in another bed in the same room watching her—whence afterward, when she put Mattie's words and actions together, she was able to give this interpretation of her thoughts. The room was so different from any thing she had been used to, that she could not understand it. She crept out of bed and went to the window. There was no blind to it, only curtains drawn close in front.

Now my reader must remember that when Mattie went to the window of her own room at home she saw into Guild Court. The house in which they now were was half way up one of the hills on the sides of which great part of Hastings is built. The sun was not shining upon the window at this hour of the morning, and therefore did not obstruct the view. Hence when Mattie went between the curtains she saw nothing but that loveliest of English seas—the Hastings sea—lying away out into the sky, or rather, as it appeared to her unaccustomed gaze, piled up like a hill against the sky, which domed it over, vast and blue, and triumphant in sunlight—just a few white sails below, and a few white clouds above, to show how blue the sea and the sky were in this glory of an autumn morning. She saw nothing of the earth on which she was upheld; only the sea and the sky. She started back with a feeling that she could never describe; there was terror, and loneliness, and helplessness in it. She turned and flew to her bed, but instead of getting into it, fell down on her knees by the side of it,

clutched the bed-clothes, and sobbed and wept aloud. Lucy was by her side in a moment, took her in her arms, carried her into her own bed, and comforted her in her bosom.

Mattie had been all her life sitting in the camera-obscura of her own microcosm, watching the shadows that went and came, and now first she looked up and out upon the world beyond and above her. All her doings had gone on in the world of her own imaginings; and although that big brain of hers contained—no, I can not say *contained*, but what else am I to say?—a being greater than all that is seen, heard, or handled, yet the outward show of divine imagination which now met her eyes might well overpower that world within her. I fancy that, like the blind to whom sight is given, she did not at first recognize the difference between herself and it, but felt as if it was all inside her and she did not know what to do with it. She would not have cried at the sight of a rose, as Poppie did. I doubt whether Mattie's was altogether such a refined nature as Poppie's—to begin with: she would have rather patronized the rose-tree, and looked down upon it as a presuming and rather unpleasant thing because it bore dying children; and she needed, some time or other, and that was *now*, just such a sight as this to take the conceit out of her. Less of a vision of the eternal world not have been sufficient. Was it worth while? Yes. The whole show of the universe was well spent to take an atom of the self out of a child. God is at much trouble with us, but he never weighs material expense against spiritual gain to one of his creatures. The whole universe existed for Mattie. There is more than that that the Father has not spared. And no human fault, the smallest, is overcome, save by the bringing in of true grand things. A sense of the infinite and the near, the far yet impending, rebuked the conceit of Mattie to the very core, and without her knowing why or how. She clung to Lucy as a child would cling, and as, all through her illness, she had never clung before.

"What is the matter with you, Mattie, dear?" asked Lucy, but asked in vain. Mattie only clung to her the closer, and began a fresh utterance of sobs. Lucy therefore held her peace for some time and waited. And in the silence of that waiting she became aware that a lark was singing somewhere out in the great blue vault.

"Listen to the lark singing so sweetly," she said at length. And Mattie moved her head enough to show that she would listen, and lay still a long while listening. At length she said with a sob—

"What is a lark? I never saw one, Miss Burton."

"A bird like a sparrow. You know what a sparrow is, don't you, dear?"

"Yes. I have seen sparrows often in the court. They pick up dirt."

"Well, a lark is like a sparrow; only it doesn't pick up dirt, and sings as you hear it. And it flies so far up into the sky that you can't see it—you can only hear the song it scatters down upon the earth."

"Oh, how dreadful!" said Mattie, burying her head again as if she would shut out hearing and sight and all.

"What is it that is dreadful? I don't understand you, Mattie."

"To fly up into that awful place up there. Shall we have to do that when we die?"

"It is not an awful place, dear. God is there, you know."

"But I am frightened. And if God is up there, I shall be frightened at him too. It is so dreadful! I used to think that God could see me when I was in London. But how he is to see me in this great place, with so many things about, cocks and larks, and all, I can't think. I'm so little! I'm hardly worth taking care of."

"But you remember, Mattie, what Somebody says—that God takes care of every sparrow."

"Yes, but that's the sparrows, and they're in the town, you know," said Mattie, with an access of her old fantastic perversity, flying for succor, as it always does, to false logic.

Lucy saw that it was time to stop. The child's fear was gone for the present, or she could not have talked such nonsense. It was just as good, however, as the logic of most of those who worship the letter and call it the word.

"Why don't you speak, Miss Burton?" asked Mattie at length, no doubt conscience-stricken by her silence.

"Because you are talking nonsense now, Mattie."

"I thought that was it. But why should that make you not speak? for I need the more to hear sense."

"No, Mattie. Mr. Fuller says that when people begin to talk falsely, it is better to be quite silent, and let them say what they please, till the sound of their own nonsense makes them ashamed."

"As it did me, Miss Burton, as soon as you wouldn't speak any more."

"He says it does no good to contradict them then, for they are not only unworthy to hear the truth—that's not it—if they would hear it—but they are not fit to hear it. They are not in a mood to get any good from it; for they are holding the door open for the devil to come in, and truth can't get in at the same door with the devil."

"Oh, how dreadful! To think of me talking like Syne!" said Mattie. "I won't do it again, Miss Burton. Do tell me what Somebody said about God and the sparrows. Didn't he say something about counting their feathers? I think I remember Mr. Spelt reading that to me one night."

"He said something about counting your hairs, Mattie."

"*Mine?*"

"Well, he said it to all the people that would listen to him. I dare say there were some that could not believe it because they did not care to be told it."

"That's me, Miss Burton. But I won't do it again. Well—What more?"

"Only this, Mattie; that if God knows how many hairs you have got on your head—"

"My big head," interrupted Mattie. "Well?"

"Yes, on your big head—if God knows that, you can't think you're too small for him to look after you."

"I will try not to be frightened at the big sky any more, dear Miss Burton; I will try."

In a few minutes she was fast asleep again.

Lucy's heart was none the less trustful that she had tried to increase Mattie's faith. He

who cared for the sparrows would surely hear her cry for Thomas, nay, would surely look after Thomas himself. The father did not forget the prodigal son all the time that he was away; did not think of him only when he came back again, worn and sorrowful. In teaching Mattie she had taught herself. She had been awake long before her, turning over and over her troubled thoughts till they were all in a raveled sleeve of care. Now she too fell fast asleep in her hope, and when she awoke, her thoughts were all knit up again in an even resolve to go on and do her duty, casting her care upon Him that cared for her.

And now Mattie's childhood commenced. She had had none as yet. Her disputatiousness began to vanish. She could not indulge it in the presence of the great sky, which grew upon her till she felt, as many children and some conscience-stricken men have felt—that it was the great eye of God looking at her; and although this feeling was chiefly associated with awe at first, she soon began to love the sky, and to be sorry and oppressed upon cloudy days when she could no longer look up into it.

The next day they went down to the beach, in a quiet place, among great stones, under the east cliff. Lucy sat down on one of them, and began to read a book Mr. Fuller had lent her. Miriam was at a little distance, picking up shells, and Mattie on another stone nearer the sea. The tide was rising. Suddenly Mattie came scrambling in great haste over all that lay between her and Lucy. Her face was pale, scared, and eager.

"I'm so frightened again!" she said; "and I can't help it. The sea! What does it mean?"

"What do you mean, Mattie?" returned Lucy, smiling.

"Well, it's roaring at me, and coming nearer and nearer, as if it wanted to swallow me up. I don't like it."

"You must not be afraid of it. God made it, you know."

"Why does he let it roar at me then?"

"I don't know. Perhaps to teach you not to be afraid."

Mattie said no more, stood a little while by Lucy, and then scrambled back to her former place.

The next day, they managed with some difficulty to get up on the East Hill; Mattie was very easily worn out, especially with climbing. She gazed at the sea below her, the sky over her head, the smooth grass under her feet, and gave one of her great sighs. Then she looked troubled.

"I feel as if I hadn't any clothes on," she said.

"How is that, Mattie?"

"Well, I don't know. I feel as if I couldn't stand steady—as if I hadn't any thing to keep me up. In London, you know, the houses were always beside to hold a body up, and keep them steady. But here, if it weren't for Somebody, I should be so frightened for falling down—I don't know where!"

Lucy smiled. She did not see then how exactly the child symbolized those who think they have faith in God, and yet when one of the swaddling bands of system or dogma to which they have been accustomed is removed, or even only slackened, immediately feel as if there were

no God, as if the earth under their feet were a cloud, and the sky over them a color, and nothing to trust in anywhere. They rest in their swaddling bands, not in God. The loosening of these is God's gift to them that they may grow. But first they are much afraid.

Still Mattie looked contemptuously on the flowers. Wandering along the cliff, they came to a patch that was full of daisies. Miriam's familiarity with the gorgeous productions of green-house and hot-house had not injured her capacity for enjoying these peasants of flowers. She rushed among them with a cry of pleasure, and began gathering them eagerly. Mattie stood by with a look of condescending contempt upon her pale face.

"Wouldn't you like to gather some daisies too, Mattie?" suggested Lucy.

"Where's the use?" said Mattie. "The poor things'll be withered in no time. It's almost a shame to gather them, I do think."

"Well, you needn't gather them if you don't want to have them," returned Lucy. "But I wonder you don't like them, they are so pretty."

"But they don't last. I don't like things that die. I had a little talk with Mr. Fuller about that."

Now Mr. Fuller had told Lucy what the child had said, and this had resulted in a good deal of talk. Mr. Fuller was a great lover of Wordsworth, and the book Lucy was now reading, the one he had lent her, was Wordsworth's Poems. She had not found what she now answered, either in Wordsworth's poems or in Mr. Fuller's conversation, but it came from them both, mingling with her love to God, and her knowledge of the Saviour's words, with the question of the child to set her mind working with them all at once. She thought for a moment, and then said—

"Listen, Mattie. You don't dislike to hear me talk, do you?"

"No, indeed," answered Mattie.

"You like the words I say to you, then?"

"Yes, indeed," said Mattie, wondering what would come next.

"But my words die as soon as they are out of my mouth."

Mattie began to see a glimmering of something coming, and held her peace and listened. Lucy went on.

"Well, the flowers are some of God's words, and they last longer than mine."

"But I understand your words. I know what you want to say to me. And I don't know the meaning of them."

"That's because you haven't looked at them long enough. You must suppose them words in God's book, and try to read them and understand them."

"I will try," said Mattie, and walked soberly toward Miriam.

But she did not begin to gather the daisies as Miriam was doing. She lay down in the grass just as Chaucer tells us he used to do in the mornings of May for the same purpose—to look at the daisy—"leaning on my elbow and my side;" and thus she continued for some time. Then she rose and came slowly back to Lucy.

"I can't tell what they mean," she said. "I have been trying very hard too."

"I don't know whether I understand them or not, myself. But I fancy we get some good from

what God shows us even when we don't understand it much.

"They are such little things!" said Mattie. "I can hardly fancy them worth making."

"God thinks them worth making though, or he would not make them. He wouldn't do any thing that he did not care about doing. There's the lark again. Listen to him how glad he is. He is so happy that he can't bear it without singing. If he couldn't sing it would break his heart, I fancy. Do you think God would have made his heart so glad if he did not care for his gladness, or given him such a song to sing—for he must have made the song and taught it to the lark—the song is just the lark's heart coming out in sounds—would he have made all the lark if he did not care for it? And he would not have made the daisies so pretty if their prettiness was not worth something in his eyes. And if God cares for them, surely it is worth our while to care for them too."

Mattie listened very earnestly, went back to the daisies, and lay down again beside a group of them. Miriam kept running about from one spot to another, gathering them. What Mattie said, or what Miriam replied, I do not know, but in a little while Mattie came to Lucy with a red face—a rare show in her.

"I don't like Miss Miriam," she said. "She's not nice at all."

"Why, what's the matter?" asked Lucy, in some surprise, for the children had got on very well together as yet. "What has she been doing?"

"She doesn't care a bit for Somebody. I don't like her."

"But Somebody likes her."

To this Mattie returned no answer, but stood thoughtful. The blood withdrew from her face to its fountain, and she went back to the daisies once more.

The following day she began to gather flowers as other children do, even to search for them as for hidden treasures. And if she did not learn their meaning with her understanding, she must have learned it with her heart, for she would gaze at some of them in a way that showed plainly enough that she felt their beauty; and in the beauty, the individual loveliness of such things, lies the dim lesson with which they faintly tincture our being. No man can be quite the same he was after having *loved* a new flower.

Thus, by degrees, Mattie's thought and feeling were drawn outward. Her health improved. Body and mind reacted on each other. She grew younger and humbler. Every day her eyes were opened to some fresh beauty on the earth, some new shadowing of the sea, some passing loveliness in the heavens. She had hitherto refused the world as a thing she had not proved; now she began to find herself at home in it, that is, to find that it was not a strange world to which she had come, but a home; not, indeed, the innermost, sacredest room of the house where the Father sat, but still a home, full of his presence, his thoughts, his designs. Is it any wonder that a child should prosper better in such a world than in a catacomb filled with the coffin-remains of thinking men? I mean her father's book-shop. Here, God was ever before her in the living forms of his thought, a power

and a blessing. Every wind that blew was his breath, and the type of his inner breathing upon the human soul. Every morning was filled with his light, and the type of the growing of that light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. And there are no natural types that do not dimly work their own spiritual reality upon the open heart of a human being.

Before she left Hastings, Mattie was almost a child.

CHAPTER XXIX.

POPPIE IN TOWN.

BETWEEN Mr. Spelt's roost and the house called No. 1 of Guild Court there stood a narrow house, as tall as the rest, which showed by the several bell-pulls ranged along the side of the door, that it was occupied by different households. Mr. Spelt had for some time had his eye upon it, in the hope of a vacancy occurring in its top chambers, occupying which he would be nearer his work, and have a more convenient home in case he should some day succeed in taming and capturing Poppie. Things had been going well in every way with the little tailor. He had had a good many more private customers for the last few months, began in consequence to look down from a growing height upon slop-work, though he was too prudent to drop it all at once, and had three or four pounds in the post-office savings-bank. Likewise his fishing had prospered. Poppie came for her sweets as regularly as a robin for his crumbs in winter. Spelt, however, did not now confine his bait to sweets; a fresh roll, a currant bun, sometimes—when his longing for his daughter had been especially strong the night before, even a Bath bun—would hang suspended by a string from the aerial threshold, so that Poppie could easily reach it, and yet it should be under the protection of the tailor from chance marauders. And every morning as she took it, she sent a sweet smile of thanks to the upper regions whence came her aid. Though not very capable of conversation, she would occasionally answer a few questions about facts—as, for instance, where she had slept the last night, to which the answer would commonly be, “Mother Flanagan’s;” but once, to the tailor’s no small discomposure, was “The Jug.” She did not seem to know exactly, however, how it was that she got incarcerated: there had been a crowd, and somebody had prigged something, and there was a scurry and a running, and she scudded as usual, and got took up. Mr. Spelt was more anxious than ever to take her home after this. But sometimes, the moment he began to talk to her she would run away, without the smallest appearance of rudeness, only of inexplicable oddity; and Mr. Spelt thought sometimes that he was not a single step nearer to the desired result than when he first baited his hook. He regarded it as a good omen, however, when, by the death of an old woman and the removal of her daughter, the topmost floor of the house, consisting of two small rooms, became vacant; and he secured them at a weekly rental quite within the reach of his improved means. He did not imagine how soon he would be able to put them to the use he most desired.

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One evening, just as the light was fading and he proceeded to light a candle to enable him to go on with his work, he heard the patter of her bare feet on the slabs, for his ear was very keen for this most pleasant of sounds, and looking down, saw the child coming toward him, holding the bottom of her ragged frock up to her head. He had scarcely time to be alarmed before she stopped at the foot of his shop, looked up pale as death, with a dark streak of blood running through the paleness, and burst into a wail. The little man was down in a moment, but before his feet reached the ground Poppie had fallen upon it in a faint. He lifted the child in his arms with a strange mixture of pity and horror in his big heart, and sped up the three stairs to his own dwelling. There he laid her on his bed, struck a light, and proceeded to examine her. He found a large and deep cut in her head, from which the blood was still flowing. He rushed down again, and fortunately found Dolman on the point of leaving. Him he sent for the doctor, and returned like an arrow to his treasure. Having done all he could, with the aid of his best Sunday shirt, to stop the bleeding, he waited impatiently for the doctor’s arrival, which seemed long delayed. Before he came the child began to revive; and taught by the motion of her lips, he got some water and held to them. Poppie drank and opened her eyes. When she saw who was bending over her, the faintest ghost of a smile glimmered about her mouth, and she closed her eyes again, murmuring something about Mother Flanagan.

As far as he could gather from piecing together what the child said afterward, Mr. Spelt came to the conclusion that Mrs. Flanagan had come home a little the worse for “cream of the valley,” and wanted more. Poppie happened to be alone in her room when she came, for we have seen that she sometimes forgot to lock the door, if, indeed, there was a lock on it. She had nothing to care for, however, but her gin-bottle; and that she thought she hid safely enough. Whether she had left it empty or not, I do not know, but she found it empty when she neither desired nor expected to find it so; and coming to the hasty and stupid conclusion that poor Poppie was the thief—just as an ill-trained child expends the rage of a hurt upon the first person within his reach—she broke the vile vessel upon Poppie’s head with the result we have seen. But the child had forgotten every thing between that and her waking upon Mr. Spelt’s bed.

The doctor came and dressed her wound, and gave directions for her treatment.

And now Mr. Spelt was in the seventh heaven of delight—he had a little woman of his own to take care of. He was thirty-nine years of age; and now, for the first time in his life, saw a prospect of happiness opening before him. No—once before, when he led the splendid Mrs. Spelt home from church, he had looked into a rosy future; but the next morning the prospect closed, and had never opened again till now. He did not lie down all that night, but hovered about her bed, as if she had been a creature that might any moment spread out great wings and fly away from him forever. Sometimes he had to soothe her with kind words, for she wandered a good deal, and would occasionally start up with wild looks, as if to fly once more from Mother Flanagan.

aghan with the gin-bottle bludgeon uplifted in her hand; then the sound of Mr. Spelt's voice would instantly soothe her, and she would lie down again and sleep. But she scarcely spoke; for at no time was Poppie given to much speech.

When the light came, he hurried down stairs to his shop, got his work and all his implements out, carried them up, and sat with them on the floor where he could see Poppie's face. There he worked away busily at a pair of cords for a groom, every now and then lifting his eyes from his seam to look down into the court, and finding them always met by the floor. Then his look would go up to the bed, seeking Poppie's pale face. He found he could not get on so fast as usual. Still he made progress; and it was a comfort to think that by working thus early he was saving time for nursing his little white Poppie.

When at length she woke, she seemed a little better; but she soon grew more feverish, and soon he found that he must constantly watch her, for she was ready to spring out of bed any moment. The father-heart grew dreadfully anxious before the doctor came; and all that day and the next he got very little work done, for the poor child was really in danger. Indeed it was more than a week before he began to feel a little easy about her; and ten days yet passed before she was at all able to leave her bed.

And herein lay the greatest blessing both for Spelt and Poppie. I doubt if any thing else could have given him a reasonable chance, as we say, of taming the wild animal. Her illness compelled her into such a continuance of dependent association with him, that the idea of him had time to grow into her heart: while all her sending propensities, which prevented her from making a quiet and thorough acquaintance with any body, were not merely thwarted, but utterly gone, while she remained weak. The humanity of the child had therefore an opportunity of developing itself; obstructions removed, the well of love belonging to her nature began to pulse and to flow, and she was, as it were, compelled to love Mr. Spelt; so that, by the time old impulses returned with returning health, he had a chance against them.

CHAPTER XXX.

MR. FULLER IN HIS CHURCH.

MR. FULLER'S main bent of practical thought was how to make his position in the church as far as possible from a sinecure. If the church was a reality at all, if it represented a vital body, every portion of it ought to be instinct with life. Yet here was one of its cells, to speak physiologically, all but inactive—a huge building of no use all the week, and on Sundays filled with organ sounds, a few responses from a sprinkling of most indifferent worshippers, and his own voice reading prayers, and trying—"with sick assay" sometimes—to move those few to be better men and women than they were. Now, so far it was a centre of life, and as such well worthy of any amount of outlay of mere money. But even money itself is a holy thing; and from the money point alone, low as that is, it might well be argued that this church was making no adequate

return for the amount expended upon it. Not that one thought of honest comfort to a human soul is to be measured against millions of expense; but that what the money did might well be measured against what the money might do. To the commercial mind such a church suggests immense futility, a judgment correct in so far as it falls short of its possibilities. To tell the truth, and a good truth it is to tell, Mr. Fuller was ashamed of St. Amos's, and was thinking day and night how to retrieve the character of his church.

And he reasoned thus with himself, in the way mostly of question and answer:

"What is a Sunday?" he asked, answering himself—"A quiet hollow scooped out of the windy hill of the week." "Must a man then go for six days shelterless ere he comes to the repose of the seventh? Are there to be no great rocks to shadow him between?—no hiding-places from the wind to let him take breath and heart for the next struggle? And if there ought to be, where are they to be found if not in our churches?—scattered like little hollows of sacred silence scooped out of the roar and bustle of our cities, dumb to the questions—What shall we eat? what shall we drink? and wherewithal shall we be clothed?—but, alas! equally dumb to the question—Where shall I find rest, for I am weary and heavy-laden? These churches stand absolute caverns of silence amid the thunder of the busy city—with a silence which does not remind men of the eternal silence of truth, but of the carelessness of heart wherewith men regard that silence. Their work is nowhere till Sunday comes, and nowhere after that till the next Sunday or the next saint's day. How is this? Why should they not lift up the voice of silence against the tumult of care? against the dissonance of Comus and his crew? How is it that they do not—standing with their glittering silent cocks and their golden unopening keys high uplifted in sunny air? Why is it that their cocks do not crow, and their keys do not open? Because their cocks are busy about how the wind blows, and their keys do not fit their own doors. They may be caverns of peace, but they are caverns without entrance—sealed fountains—a mockery of the thirst and confusion of men." "But men do not want entrance: what is the use of opening the doors of our churches so long as men do not care to go in? Times are changed now." "But does not the very word Revelation imply a something coming from heaven—not certainly before men were ready for it, for God can not be precipitate—but before they had begun to pray for it?" Mr. Fuller remembered how his own father used always to compel his children to eat one mouthful of any dish he heard them say at table that they did not like—whereupon they generally chose to go on with it. "But they won't come in." "How can you tell till you try, till you fulfill the part of the minister (good old beautiful Christian word), and be 'the life o' the building?'" "Presumption! Are not the prayers every thing?" "At least not till you get people to pray them." "You make too much of the priest." "Leave him for God, and the true priest has all the seal of his priesthood that he wants." At least so thought Mr. Fuller. "What is the priest?" he asked, going on with the same catechism. "Just a man to be among men what the Sunday is

among the work-days of the week—a man to remind you that there is a life within this life, or beyond and about it, if you like that mode better—for extremes meet in the truest figures—that care is not of God, that faith and confidence are truer, simpler, more of common sense than balancances at bankers' or preference shares. He is a protest against the money-heaping tendencies of men, against the desire of rank or estimation or any kind of social distinction. With him all men are equal, as in the Church all have equal rights, and rank ceases on the threshold of the same, overpowered by the presence of the Son of Mary, who was married to a carpenter—overpowered by the presence of the God of the whole earth, who wrote the music for the great organ of the spheres, after he had created them to play the same." Such was the calling of the clergyman, as Mr. Fuller saw it. Rather a lofty one, and simply a true one. If the clergyman can not rouse men to seek his God and their God, if he can only rest in his office, which becomes false the moment he rests in it, being itself for a higher end; if he has no message from the infinite to quicken the thoughts that cleave to the dust, the sooner he takes to grave-digging or any other honest labor, the sooner will he get into the kingdom of heaven, and the higher will he stand in it. But now came the question—from the confluence of all these considerations, "Why should the church be for Sundays only? And of all places in the world, what place wanted a week-day reminder of truth, of honesty, of the kingdom of heaven more than London? Why should the churches be closed all the week, to the exclusion of the passers-by, and open on the Sunday to the weariness of those who entered? Might there not be too much of a good thing on the Sunday, and too little of it on a week-day?" Again Mr. Fuller said to himself, "What is a parson?" and once more he answered himself, that he was a man to keep the windows of heaven clean, that its light might shine through upon men below. What use, then, once more, could he make of the Church of St. Amos?

And again, why should the use of any church be limited to the Sunday? Men needed religious help a great deal more on the week-day than on the Sunday. On the Sunday, surrounded by his family, his flowers, his tame animals, his friends, a man necessarily, to say the least of it, thinks less of making great gains, is more inclined to the family view of things generally; whereas upon the week-day, he is in the midst of the struggle and the fight; it is catch who can, then, through all the holes and corners, highways and lanes of the busy city: what would it not be then if he could strike a five minutes'—yea, even a one minute's—silence into the heart of the uproar? if he could entice one vessel to sail from the troubled sea of the streets, shops, counting-houses, into the quiet haven of the church, the doors of whose harbor stood ever open? There the wind of the world would be quiet behind them. His heart swelled within him as he thought of sitting there keeping open door of refuge for the storm-tossed, the noise-deafened, the crushed, the hopeless. He would not trouble them with many words. There should be no long prayers. "But," thought he, "as often as one came in, I would read the col-

lect for the day; I would soothe him with comfort out of Handel or Meudelssohn, I would speak words of healing for the space of three minutes. I would sit at the receipt of such custom. I would fish for men—not to make churchmen of them—not to get them under my thumb"—(for Mr. Fuller used such homely phrases sometimes that certain fledgeling divines feared he was vulgar)—"not to get them under the Church's thumb, but to get them out of the hold of the devil, to lead them into the presence of Him who is the Truth, and so can make them free."

Therefore he said to himself that his church, instead of accumulating a weary length of service on one day, should be open every day, and that there he would be ready for any soul upon which a flash of silence had burst through the clouds that ever rise from the city life and envelope those that have their walk therein.

It was not long before his cogitations came to the point of action; for with men of Mr. Fuller's kind, all their meditations have action for their result: he opened his church—set the door to the wall, and got a youth to whom he had been of service, and who was an enthusiast in music, to play about one o'clock, when those who dined in the city began to go in search of their food, such music as might possibly waken the desire to see what was going on in the church. For he said to himself that the bell was of no use now, for no one would heed it; but that the organ might fulfill the spirit of the direction that "the curate that ministereth in every parish church shall say the morning and evening prayer—where he ministereth, and shall cause a bell to be tolled thereunto a convenient time before he begins, that the people may come to hear God's word and to pray with him."

Over the crowded street, over the roar of omnibuses, carts, wagons, cabs, and all kinds of noises, rose the ordered sounds of consort. Day after day, day after day, arose the sounds of hope and prayer; and not a soul in the streets around took notice of the same. Why should they? The clergy had lost their hold of them. They believed that the clergy were given to gain and pleasure just as much as they were themselves. Those even of the passers-by who were ready to acknowledge worth where they saw it, were yet not ready to acknowledge the probability of finding it in the priesthood; for their experience, and possibly some of their prejudices, were against it. They were wrong; but who was to blame for it? The clergy of the eighteenth century, because so many of them were neither Christians nor gentlemen; and the clergy of the present century, because so many of them are nothing but gentlemen—men ignorant of life, ignorant of human needs, ignorant of human temptations, yea, ignorant of human aspirations; because in the city pulpits their voice is not uplifted against city vices—against speculation, against falsehood, against money-loving, against dishonesty, against selfishness; because elsewhere their voices are not uplifted against the worship of money, and rank, and equipage; against false shows in dress and economy; against buying and not paying; against envy and emulation; against effeminacy and manishness; against a morality which consists in discretion. Oh! for the voice of a St. Paul, or a St. John! But it would be of little use:

such men would have small chance of being heard. They would find the one-half of Christendom so intent upon saving souls instead of doing its duty, that the other half thought it all humbug. The organ sounded on from day to day, and no one heeded.

But Mr. Fuller had the support of knowing that there were clergymen east and west who felt with him; men who, however much he might differ from them in the details of belief, yet worshiped the Lord Christ, and believed him to be the King of men, and the Saviour of men whose sins were of the same sort as their own, though they had learned them in the slums and not at Oxford or Cambridge. He knew that there were greater men, and better workers than himself among the London clergy; and he knew that he must work like them, after his own measure and fashion, and not follow the multitude. And the organ went on playing—I had written *praying*—for I was thinking of what our Lord said, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.

At last one day, about a quarter past one o'clock, a man came into the church. Mr. Fuller, who sat in the reading-desk, listening to the music and praying to God, lifted up his eyes and saw Mr. Kately.

The book-seller had been passing, and, having heard the organ, thought he would just look in and see what was doing in the church. For this church was a sort of link between him and his daughter now that she was away.

The moment he entered Mr. Fuller rose, and knelt, and began to read the collect for the day, in order that Mr. Kately might pray with him. As soon as his voice arose the organ, which was then playing very softly, ceased; Mr. Kately knelt, partly, it must be allowed, out of regard for Mr. Fuller; the organist came down and knelt beside him; and Mr. Fuller went on with the second and third collects. After this he read the Epistle and the Gospel for the foregoing Sunday, and then he opened his mouth and spoke—for not more than three minutes, and only to enforce the lesson. Then he knelt and let his congregation depart with a blessing. Mr. Kately rose and left the chapel, and the organist went back to his organ.

Now all this was out of order. But was it as much out of order as the omission of prayer altogether, which the Church enjoins shall be daily? Times had changed: with them the order of prayer might possibly be changed without offense. At least Mr. Fuller was not such a slave to the letter as to believe that not to pray at all was better than to alter the form by choice of parts. And although in the use of prayers the Church had made great changes upon what had been first instituted, he did not care to leave present custom for the sake merely of reverting to that which was older. He had no hope of getting business men to join in a full morning service—even such as it was at first—upon any week-day.

Mr. Kately dropped in again before long, and again Mr. Fuller read the collect and went through the same form of worship. Thus he did every time any one appeared in the church, which was very seldom for the first month or so. But he had some friends scattered about the city, and when they knew of his custom they would

think of it as they passed his church, until at length there were very few days indeed upon which two or three persons did not drop in and join in the collects, Epistle, and Gospel. To these he always spoke for a few minutes, and then dismissed them with the blessing.

CHAPTER XXXI.

A DREARY ONE.

“COULDN'T you get a holiday on Saturday, Tom?” said Mr. Worboise. “I mean to have one, and I should like to take you with me.”

“I don't know, father,” answered Tom, who did not regard the proposal as involving any great probability of enjoyment; “my holiday is coming so soon that I should not like to ask for it, especially as Mr. Stopper—”

“What about Mr. Stopper? Not over friendly, eh? He is not a bad fellow, though, is Stopper. I'll ask for you, if you like that better.”

“I would much rather you wouldn't, father.”
“Pooh, pooh! nonsense, man! It's quite a different thing if I ask for it, you know.”

Thomas made no farther objection, for he had nothing at hand upon which to ground a fresh one; nor, indeed, could he well have persisted in opposing what seemed a kind wish of his father. It was not, however, merely because they had little to talk about, and that Thomas always felt a considerable restraint in his father's presence—a feeling not very uncommon to young men—but he lived in constant dread of something coming to light about Lucy. He feared his father much more than he loved him; not that he had ever been hardly treated by him; not that he had ever even seen him in a passion, for Mr. Worboise had a very fair command of his temper: it was the hardness and inflexibility read upon his face from earliest childhood, that caused fear thus to overlay love. If a father finds that from any cause such is the case, he ought at once to change his system, and to require very little of any sort from his child till a new crop has begun to appear on the ill-farmed ground of that child's heart.

Now the meaning of the holiday was this: Mr. Worboise had a city-client—a carpet-knight—by name Sir Jonathan Hubbard, a decent man, as the Scotch would say, jolly, companionable, with a husky laugh, and friendly unfinished countenance in which the color was of more weight than the drawing—for, to quote Chaucer of the Franklin, “a better envined man,” either in regard of body or cellar, “was nowhere none:” upon Sir Jonathan's sociability Mr. Worboise had founded the scheme of the holiday. Not that he intended to risk any intrusion—Mr. Worboise was far too knowing a man for that. The fact was that he had appointed to wait upon his client at his house near Bickley on that day—at such an hour, however, as would afford cover to his pretense of having brought his son out with him for a holiday in the country. It was most probable that Sir Jonathan would invite them to stay to dinner, and so to spend their holiday with him. There was no Lady Hubbard alive, but there was a Miss Hubbard at the head of the house; and hence Mr. Worboise's strategy. Nor had he reckoned without his host, for if Sir Jonathan was

any thing he was hospitable: things fell out as the lawyer had foreloped, if not foreseen. Sir Jonathan was pleased with the young fellow, would not allow him to wait companionless in the drawing-room till business was over—sent, on the contrary, for his daughter, and insisted on the two staying to dinner. He was one of those eaters and drinkers who have the redeeming merit of enjoying good things a great deal more in good company. Sir Jonathan's best port would seem to him to have something the matter with it if he had no one to share it. If, however, it had come to the question of a half-bottle or no companion, I would not answer for Sir Jonathan. But his cellar would stand a heavy siege.

Thomas was seated in the drawing-room, which looked cold and rather cheerless; for no company was expected, and I presume Miss Hubbard did not care for color, save as reflected from her guests, seeing she had all her furniture in pinafors. How little some rich people know how to inherit the earth! The good things of it they only uncover when they can *make*, not *receive*, a show.

My dear reader—No, I will not take a liberty to which I have no right; for perhaps were he to see me he would not like me, and possibly were I to meet him I should not like him: I will rather say *My Reader*, without the impertinence or the pledge of an adjective—have a little patience while I paint Miss Hubbard just with the feather-end of my pen. I shall not be long about it.

Thomas sat in the drawing-room, I say, feeling vacant, for he was only waiting, not expecting, when the door opened, and in came a fashionable girl—rather tall, handsome, bright-eyed, well-dressed, and yet—What was it that Thomas did not like about her? Was it that she was dressed in the extreme of the fashion? I will not go on to say what the fashion was, for before I had finished writing it, it would have ceased to be the fashion; and I will not paint my picture *knowingly* with colors that must fade the moment they are laid on. To be sure she had ridden the fashion till it was only fit for the knacker's yard; but she soon made him forget that, for she was clever, pleasant, fast—which means affectedly unrefined, only her affectation did no violence to fact—and altogether amusing. I believe what Thomas did not like about her at first was just all wherein she differed from Lucy. Yet he could not help being taken with her; and when his father and Sir Jonathan came into the room, the two were talking like a sewing-machine.

"Laura, my dear," said the knight, "I have prevailed on Mr. Worboise to spend the day with us. You have no engagement, I believe?"

"Fortunately, I have not, papa."

"Well, I'll just give orders about dinner, and then I'll take our friends about the place. I want to show them my new stable. You had better come with us."

Sir Jonathan always ordered the dinner himself. He thought no woman capable of that department of the household economy. Laura put on her hat—beautiful with a whole king-fisher—and they went out into the grounds to the stable—trim as her drawing-room—where her favorite horse ate apples out of her pocket: from the stable to the hot-houses and kitchen-garden; then out at a back door into the lane—shadowy with

trees—in which other colors than green were now very near carrying the vote of the leaves. Sweet scents of decay filled the air, waved about, swelling and sinking, on the flow of a west wind, gentle and soft, as if it had been fanned from the wings of spring when nearest to summer. Great white clouds in a brilliant sky tempered the heat of the sun. What with the pure air, the fine light, and the handsome girl by his side, Thomas was in a gayer mood than had been his for many a long day. Miss Hubbard talked plentifully—about balls and theatres and Mansion House dinners, about Rotten Row, and St. James's; and although of all these Thomas knew very little, yet, being quick and sympathetic, he was able to satisfy the lady sufficiently to keep her going. He was fortunate enough besides to say one or two clever things with which she was pleased, and to make an excellent point once in a criticism upon a girl they both knew, which, slighting her, conveyed, by no very occult implication, a compliment to Miss Hubbard. By the time they had reached this stage of acquaintance, they had left stout Sir Jonathan and Mr. Worboise far behind; but Miss Hubbard was not in the least danger of being made uncomfortable by any squeamish notions of propriety; and, having nothing more amusing to do, and being out already, she proposed that they should go home by a rather longer road, which would lead them over a hill whence they would get a good view of the country.

"Do you like living in the country, Miss Hubbard?"

"Oh! dear no. London for me. I can't tell what made papa come to this dull place."

"The scenery is very lovely though."

"People say so. I'm sure I don't know. Scenery wasn't taught where I went to school."

"Were you taught horses there?" asked Thomas slyly.

"No. That comes by nature. Do you know I won this bracelet in a handicap last Derby?" she said, showing a very fine arm as well as bracelet, though it was only the morning, so-called.

Miss Hubbard had no design upon Thomas. How could she have? She knew nothing about him. She would have done the same with any gentleman she liked well enough to chatter to. And if Thomas felt it and thought that Laura Hubbard was more entertaining than sober Lucy Burton, he made up to Lucy for it in his own idea by asserting to himself that, after all, she was far handsomer than Miss Hubbard, handsome as she was. Yet I should never think of calling Lucy handsome. She was lovely—almost beautiful too. *Handsome* always indicates more or less vulgarity—no, I mean commonness—in my ears. And certainly, whatever she might be capable of, had she been blessed with poverty, Miss Hubbard was as common as she was handsome. Thomas was fool enough to revert to Byron to try his luck with that. She soon made him ashamed of showing any liking for such a silly thing as poetry. That piqued him as well, however.

"You sing, I suppose?" he said.

"Oh, yes, when I can't help it—after dinner sometimes."

"Well, you sing poetry, don't you?"

"I don't know. One must have some words

or other just to make her open her mouth. I never know what they're about. Why should I? Nobody ever pays the least attention to them—or to the music either, except it be somebody that wants to marry you."

But why should I go farther with the record of such talk? It is not interesting to me, and, therefore, can hardly be so to my reader. Even if I had the art to set it forth aright, I hope I should yet hold to my present belief, that nothing in which the art is uppermost is worth the art expended upon it.

Thomas was a little shocked at her coolness, certainly; but at the same time that very coolness seemed a challenge. Before they had reached the house again, he was vexed to find he had made no impression upon Miss Hubbard.

Farewell to such fencing. By the time he had heard her sing, and his father and he were on their way home again, I am glad to say that Thomas had had nearly enough of her. He thought her voice loud and harsh in speech, showy and distressing in song, and her whole being *braava*. The contrasts in Lucy had come back upon him with a gush of memorial loveliness; for, as I have said, she still held the fortress of his heart, and held it for its lawful owner.

Scarcely were they seated in the railway carriage, of which they were the sole occupants, when the elder Worboise threw a shot across the bows of the younger.

"Well, Tom, my boy," he said, rubbing his lawyer palms, "how do you like Miss Hubbard?"

"Oh, very well, father," answered Thomas, indifferently. "She's a very jolly sort of girl."

"She's worth a hundred thousand," said his father, in a tone that would have been dry but for a touch of slight resentment at the indifference, possibly in the father's view irreverence, with which he spoke of her.

"Girls?" asked Thomas.

"Pounds," answered his father, clenchedly.

Tom was now convinced of his father's design in taking him out for a holiday. But even now he shrunk from confession. And how did he justify his sneaking now? By saying to himself, "Lucy can't have any thing like that money; it won't do. I must wait a more fitting opportunity." But he thought he was very brave indeed, and actually seizing the bull of his father's will by the horns when he ventured to take his meaning for granted, and replied—

"Why, father, a fellow has no chance with a girl like that, except he could ride like Assheton Smith, and knew all the slang of the hunting-field as well as the race-course."

"A few children will cure her of that," said his father.

"What I say is," persisted Thomas, "that she would never look at a clerk."

"If I thought you had any chance, I would buy you a commission in the Blues."

"It wants blue blood for that," said Thomas, whose heart notwithstanding danced in his bosom at the sound of *commission*. Then, afraid lest he should lose the least feather of such a chance, he added hastily, "But any regiment would do."

"I dare say," returned his father at right angles. "When you have made a little progress

it will be time enough. She knows nothing about what you are now. Her father asked me, and I said I had not made up my mind yet what to do with you."

"But, as I said before," resumed Thomas, fighting somewhat feebly, "I haven't a chance with her. She likes better to talk about horses than any thing else, and I never had my leg across a horse's back in my life—as you know, father," he added in a tone of reproach.

"You mean, Tom, that I have neglected your education. Well, it shall be so no longer. You shall go to the riding-school on Monday night. It won't be open to-morrow, I suppose."

I hope my reader is not so tired of this chapter as I am. It is bad enough to have to read such uninteresting things—but to have to write them! The history that is undertaken must be written, however, whether the writer weary sometimes of his task, or the interest of his labor carry him lightly through to the close.

Thomas, wretched creature, dallied with his father's proposal. He did not intend accepting it, but the very idea of marrying a rich, fashionable girl like that, with a knight for a father, flattered him. Still more was he excited at the notion, the very possibility of wearing a uniform. And what might he not do with so much money? Then, when the thought of Lucy came, he soothed his conscience by saying to himself, "See how much I must love her when I am giving up all this for her sake!" Still his thoughts hovered about what he said he was giving up. He went to bed on Sunday night, after a very pathetic sermon from Mr. Simon, with one resolution, and one only, namely, to go to the riding-school in Finsbury on Monday night.

But something very different was waiting him.

CHAPTER XXXII.

AN EXPLOSION.

THE whole ground under Thomas's feet was honey-combed and filled with combustible matter. A spark dropped from any, even a loving hand, might send every thing in the air. It needed not an enemy to do it.

Lucy Burton had been enjoying a delightful season of repose by the sea-side. She had just enough to do with and for the two children to gain healthy distraction to her thinking. But her thinking as well as her bodily condition grew healthier every day that she breathed the sea air. She saw more and more clearly than ever that things must not go on between her and Thomas as they were now going on. The very scent of the sea that came in at her bed room window when she opened it in the morning, protested against it; the wind said it was no longer endurable; and the clear, blue autumn sky said it was a shame for his sake, if not for her own. She must not do evil that good might come; she must not allow Thomas to go on thus for the sake even of keeping a hold of him for his good. She would give him one chance more, and if he did not accept it, she would not see him again, let come of it what would. In better mood still, she would say, "Let God take care of that for him and me." She had not written to him since she came: that was one thing she could avoid. Now she re-

solved that she would write to him just before her return, and tell him that the first thing she would say to him when she saw him would be—had he told his father? and upon his answer depended their future. But then the question arose, what address she was to put upon the letter; for she was not willing to write either to his home or to the counting-house, for evident reasons. Nor had she come to any conclusion, and had indeed resolved to encounter him once more without having written, when from something rather incoherently expressed in her grandmother's last letter, which indeed referred to an expected absence of Mr. Stopper, who was now the old lady's main support, she concluded, hastily, I allow, that Mr. Worboise was from home, and that she might without danger direct a letter to Highbury.

Through some official at the Court of Probate, I fancy that Mr. Worboise had heard of a caveat having been entered with reference to the will of Mr. Richard Boxall, deceased. I do not know that this was the case, but I think something must have occurred to irritate him against those whom he, with the law on his side, was so sorely tempted to wrong. I know that the very contemplation of wrong is sufficient to irritate, and that very grievously, against one thus contemplated; but Lucy would have been a very good match, though not equal to Miss Hubbard, even in Mr. Worboise's eyes. On the other hand, however, if he could but make up, not his mind, but his conscience, to take Boxall's money, he would be so much the more likely to secure Miss Hubbard's; which, together with what he could leave him, would make a fortune over two hundred thousand—sufficient to make his son somebody. If Thomas had only spoken in time, that is, while his father's conscience still spoke, and before he had cast eyes of ambition toward Sir Jonathan's banker's! All that was wanted on the devil's side now was some personal quarrel with the rightful heirs. And if Mr. Worboise did not secure that by means of Mr. Sargent's caveat, he must have got it from what happened on the Monday morning. Before Thomas came down to breakfast, the postman had delivered a letter addressed to him, with the Hastings postmark upon it.

When Thomas entered, and had taken his seat, on the heels of the usual cool *Good-morning*, his father tossed the letter to him across the table, saying, more carelessly than he felt—

"Who's your Hastings correspondent, Tom?"

The question, coming with the sight of Lucy's handwriting, made the eloquent blood surge into Tom's face. His father was not in the way of missing any thing that there was to see, and he saw Tom's face.

"A friend of mine," stammered Tom. "Gone down for a holiday."

"One of your fellow-clerks?" asked his father with a dry significance that indicated the possible neighborhood of annoyance, or worse. "I thought the writing of doubtful gender."

For Lucy's writing was not in the style of a field of corn in a hurricane: it had a few mistakable curves about it, though to the experienced eye it was nothing the less feminine that it did not affect femininity.

"No," faltered Tom, "he's not a clerk; he's a—well, he's a—teacher of music."

"Hm!" remarked Mr. Worboise. "How

did you come to make his acquaintance, Tom?" And he looked at his son with awful eyes, lighted from behind with growing suspicion.

Tom felt his jaws growing paralyzed. His mouth was as dry as his hand, and it seemed as if his tongue would rattle in it like the clapper of a cracked bell if he tried to speak. But he had nothing to say. A strange tremor went through him from top to toe, making him conscious of every inch of his body at the very moment when his embarrassment might have been expected to make him forget it altogether. His father kept his eyes fixed on him, and Tom's perturbation increased every moment.

"I think, Tom, the best way out of your evident confusion will be to hand me over that letter," said his father, in a cool, determined tone, at the same time holding out his hand to receive it.

Tom had strength to obey only because he had not strength to resist. But he rose from his seat, and would have left the room.

"Sit down, sir," said Mr. Worboise, in a voice that revealed growing anger, though he could not yet have turned over the leaf to see the signature. In fact, he was more annoyed at his son's pusillanimity than at his attempted deception. "You make a soldier!" he added, in a tone of contempt that stung Tom—not to the heart, but to the backbone. When he had turned the leaf and saw the signature, he rose slowly from his chair and walked to the window, folding the letter as he went. After communing with the garden for awhile, he turned again to the table and sat down. It was not Mr. Worboise's way to go into a passion when he had any thing like reasonable warning that his temper was in danger.

"Tom, you have been behaving like a fool. Thank heaven, it's not too late! How could you be such a fool? Believe me, it's not a safe amusement to go trifling with girls this way."

With a great effort, a little encouraged by the quietness of his father's manner, Tom managed to say, "I wasn't trifling."

"Do you mean to tell me," said his father, with more sternness than Tom had ever known him assume—"do you mean to tell me," he repeated, "that you have come under any obligation to this girl?"

"Yes, I have, father."

"You fool! A dress-maker is no fit match for you."

"She's not a dress-maker," said Tom, with some energy, for he was beginning to grow angry, and that alone could give a nature like his courage in such circumstances; "she's a lady, if ever there was one."

"Stuff and nonsense!" said his father. "Don't get on your high horse with me. She's a beggar, if ever there was one."

Tom smiled unbelievably, or tried to smile; for now his tremor, under the influence of his wholesome anger, had abated, and his breath began to come and go more naturally. A little more, and he would feel himself a hero, stoutly defending his lady-love, fearless of consequences to himself. But he said nothing more just yet.

"You know better than I do, you think, you puppy! I tell you she's not worth a penny—no, nor her old witch of a grandmother either. A pretty mess you've made of it! You just sit

down and tell the poor girl—it's really too bad of you, Tom!—that you're sorry you've been such a confounded fool, but there's no help for it."

"Why should I say that?"

"Because it's true.—By all that's sacred!" said Mr. Worboise, with solemn fierceness, "you give up that girl, or you give up me. Not that your father is any thing to you; but I swear, if you carry on with that girl, you shall not cross my door as long as you do; and not a penny you shall have out of my pocket. You'll have to live on your salary, my fine fellow, and perhaps that'll bring down your proud stomach a bit. By Jove! You may starve for me.—Come, my boy," he added with sudden gentleness, "don't be a fool."

Whether Mr. Worboise meant all he said, I can not tell, but at least he meant Thomas to believe that he did. And Thomas did believe it. All the terrible contrast between a miserable clerkship, with lodging as well as food to be provided, and a commission in the army with unlimited pocket-money, and the very name of business forgotten, rose before him. A conflict began within him which sent all the blood to the surface of his body, and made him as hot now as he had been cold just before. He again rose from his seat, and this time his father, who saw that he had aimed well, did not prevent him from leaving the room. He only added as his son reached the door, "Mark what I say, Tom: *I mean it*; and when I mean a thing, it's not my fault if it's not done. You can go to the riding-school to-night, or you can look out for a lodging suitable to your means. I should recommend Wapping."

Thomas stood on the heel of one foot and the toes of the other, holding the handle of the door in his hand till his father had done speaking. He then left the room without reply, closed the door behind him, took his hat and went out. He was half way to London before he remembered that he had left Luey's letter in his father's hands and had not even read it. This crowned his misery. He dared not go back for it; but the thought of Luey's words to him being at the mercy of his hard-hearted father moved him so, that he almost made up his mind never to enter the house again. And then how Lucy must love him when he had given up every thing for her sake, knowing quite well, too, that she was not going to have any fortune after all! But he did not make up his mind; he never had made up his mind yet; or, if he had, he unmade it again upon meeting with the least difficulty. And now his whole "state of man" was in confusion. He went into the counting-house as if he had been walking in a dream, sat down to his desk mechanically, droned through the forenoon, had actually only a small appetite for his dinner, and when six o'clock arrived, and the place was closed, knew no more what he was going to do than when he started in the morning.

But he neither went to the riding-school in Finsbury, nor to look for a lodging in Wapping.

CHAPTER XXIII.

DOWN AT LAST.

In the very absence of purpose, he strolled up Guild Court to call upon Molken, who was always at home at that hour.

Molken welcomed him even more heartily than usual. After a few minutes' conversation they went out together: having no plan of his own, Thomas was in the hands of any one who had a plan of which he formed a part. They betook themselves to one of their usual haunts. It was too early yet for play, so they called for some refreshment, and Thomas drank more than he had ever drunk before, not with any definite idea of drowning the trouble in his mind, but sipping and sipping from mere restlessness and the fluttering motion of a will unable to act.

It was a cold evening. An autumn wind which had dropped in its way all the now mournful memories of nature, and was itself the more dreary therefore, tumbled a stray billow now and then through the eddies of its chimney-rocks and house-top-shoals upon the dirty window of the little dreary den in which they sat, drinking their gin and water at a degraded card-table whose inlaid borders were not yet quite obscured by the filth caked upon it from greasy fingers and dusters dirtier than the smoke they would remove. They talked—not about gaming—no: they talked about politics and poetry; about Goethe and Heine; and Molken exerted all his wit and sympathy to make himself agreeable to his dejected friend, urging him to rise above his dejection by an effort of the will; using in fact much the same arguments as Lady Macbeth when she tried to persuade her husband that the whole significance of things depended on how he chose to regard them: "These things must not be thought after these ways." Thomas, however, had not made a confidant of Molken. He had only dropped many words that a man like him would not fail to piece together into some theory regarding the condition and circumstances of one of whom he meant to make gain.

At length what between Molken's talk and the gin, a flame of excitement began to appear in Thomas's weary existence; and almost at the same instant a sound of voices and footsteps was heard below; they came up the stair; the door of the room opened; and several fellows entered, all eager for the excitement of play as a drunkard for his drink, all talking, laughing, chaffing. A blast of wind laden with rain from a laboring cloud which had crept up from the west and darkened the place, smote on the windows, and soft yet keen the drops pattered on the glass. All outside was a chaos of windy mist and falling rain. They called for lights, and each man ordered his favorite drink; the face of nature who was doing her best to befriend them was shut out by a blind of green and black stripes stained with yellow; two dirty packs of cards were produced—not from the pocket of any of the company, for none of the others would have trusted such a derivation, but from the archives of the house; and drawing round the table, they began to offer their sacrifice to the dreary excitement for whose presence their souls had been thirsting all the day. Two of them besides Molken were foreigners, one of them apparently a

German, a very quiet and rather a gentlemanly man, between whom and Molken, however, if Thomas had been on the outlook, he might, I fancy, have seen certain looks of no good omen interchanged.

They began playing very gently—and fairly no doubt; and Thomas for some time went on winning.

There was not even the pretense of much money among them. Probably a few gold pieces was the most any of them had. When one of them had made something at this sort of small private game, he would try his luck at one of the more public tables, I presume. As the game went on and they grew more excited, they increased their stakes a little. Still they seemed content to go on for a little. Thomas and Molken were partners, and still they won. Gradually the points were increased, and betting began. Thomas began to lose and lose, of course, more rapidly than he had won. He had had two or three pounds in his pocket when he began, but all went now—the last of it in a bet on the odd trick. He borrowed of Molken—lost; borrowed and lost, still sipping his gin and water, till Molken declared he had himself lost every thing. Thomas laid his watch on the table, for himself and Molken—it was not of great value—a gift of his mother only. He lost it. What was to be done? He had one thing left—a ring of some value which Lucy had given him to wear for her. It had belonged to her mother. He pulled it off his finger, showed that it was a rose diamond, and laid it on the table. It followed the rest. He rose, caught up his hat, and, as so many thousands of gamblers have done before, rushed out into the rain and the darkness.

Through all the fumes of the gin which had begun to render “the receipt of reason a limbeck only,” the thought gleamed upon his cloudy mind that he ought to have received his quarter’s salary that very day. If he had had that, what might he not have done? It was his, and yet he could not have it. His mind was all in a confused despair, ready to grasp at any thing that offered him a chance of winning back what he had lost. If he had gone home and told his father—but he was not capable of reasoning out any thing. Lucy’s ring was his chief misery: so much must be said for him. Something—he did not know what—drove him toward Guild Court. I believe, though in his after reflections he could not identify the impulse, that it was the same which he obeyed at last. Before he knew where he was going, he was at Mrs. Boxall’s door. He found it ajar, and walked up the stair to the sitting-room. That door too was open, and there was no one there. But he saw at a glance, from the box on the floor and the shawl on the table, that Lucy had returned, and he supposed that her grandmother had gone up stairs with her. The same moment his eyes sought the wall, and there hung two keys. They were the keys of the door of communication and of the safe.

Mr. Stopper, wise in his generation, sought, as we have seen, to stand as well as possible with the next of kin and supposed heir to Mr. Boxall, namely, his mother. He had, therefore, by degrees, made himself necessary to her, in her fancy at least, by giving her good advice till she thought she could not do without his wisdom. Nor that alone; he had pleased her by a hun-

dred little acknowledgments of her suzerainty, especially grateful to one who loved power as Mrs. Boxall did. Among the rest, one evening, after locking up the counting-house, he went to her with those two keys in his hand, and kept playing with them till he was taking his leave—then, as if a sudden thought had struck him, said—

“But I don’t see the use of troubling myself with these keys.—I may as well hang them up somewhere;” he added, looking about for a place.

“I don’t know that it’s wise to leave them here,” objected Mrs. Boxall.

“Oh! don’t be uneasy, ma’am,” returned Mr. Stopper. “You mustn’t suppose we leave a mint of money in the house at night. If we did, you wouldn’t be safe either. It’s only what comes in after banking-hours—a matter of ten pounds, or thereabouts, sometimes more, sometimes less. The safe’s more for the books—in case of fire, you know.”

“I hope there’s no danger of that, Mr. Stopper.”

“Not as long as the neighbors don’t take fire. I see every spark out when we have a fire before I turn my back on the premises. Indeed, I’m rather more careful over the fire than the cash-box.”

In the mean time Mr. Stopper had discovered a brass-headed nail in the wall, and thereupon he had hung the keys, and there he had hung them every evening since, and there they hung at this moment when Thomas’s eyes went in search of them.

When he considered the whole affair afterward, Thomas thought he must have been driven by a demon. He hardly knew whether he was thinking over or doing the thing that was present to him. No thought of resisting it as a temptation arose to meet it. He knew that there was eleven pounds odd shillings in the cash-box, for he had seen one of the other clerks count it; he knew that the cash-box was in the safe; he knew that that was the key of it; he knew that the firm owed him twenty-five pounds; he could replace it again before the morning; and while thinking all this he was “doing the effect of his thinking,” almost without knowing it: he found himself standing before the safe with the key already in the lock, and the cold handle of the door in his hand. But it was dark all around and within him. In there alone lay light and hope. In another moment the door was open, and the contents of the cash-box—gold, silver, copper—in his pocket. It is possible that even then he might have restored the money if he had not heard the step of the policeman at the street-door. He left the safe open as it was, with the key in it, and sped from the house.

Nothing more marked itself on his memory till he reached the room where he had left his friends. It was dark. There was no one there. They had gone to try their luck in a more venturesome manner, where rogue met rogue, and fortune was umpire rather than cunning. He knew their haunts, followed and found them. But his watch and ring were gone. They told him, however, where they were. He would go and seek them to-morrow. Meantime he would play. He staked and lost—lost, won, won again; doubled his stakes, won still; and when he left the house it was with a hundred pounds in his pocket and a gray dawn of wretchedness in his heart.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

MRS. BOXALL AND MR. STOPPER.

LUCY was not up stairs with her grandmother when Thomas went into the room. She had arrived some time before, and had run across to the book-seller's to put Mattie to bed, according to promise, leaving the door just ajar that she might not trouble her grandmother to come down and open it for her. She had come home hoping against hope that Thomas must by this time have complied, in some way or other, with her request—must have written to his father, or, at least, so positively made up his mind to tell him on his return, that he would be at the station to meet her with the assurance, or would appear in Guild Court some time during the evening with a response to her earnest appeal. When she had put the child to bed, she lingered a few moments with the book-seller in his back parlor, for the shop was shut up, telling him about Mattie and listening to what little bits of news the worthy man had to impart in return. Their little chat ran something in this way :

"And how have you been, Mr. Kitley?"

"Oh, among the middlins, miss, thank you. How's yourself been?"

"Quite well, and no wonder."

"I don't know that, miss, with two young things a pullin' of you all ways at once. I hope Mattie wasn't over and above troublesome to you."

"She was no trouble at all. You must have missed her though."

"I couldn't ha' believed how I'd miss her. Do you know the want of her to talk to made me do what I ain't done for twenty year?"

"What's that, Mr. Kitley? Go to church of a Sunday?"

"More than that, miss," answered the book-seller, laughing—a little sheepishly. "Would you believe it of me?—I've been to church of a week-day more than once. Ha! ha! But then it wasn't a long rigmarole, like—"

"You mustn't talk about it like that—to me, you know, Mr. Kitley."

"I beg your pardon, miss. I only meant he didn't give us a Sundayful of it, you know. I never could ha' stood that. We had just a little prayer, and a little chapter, and a little sermon—good sense too, upon my word. I know I altered a price or two in my catalogue when I come home again. I don't know as I was right, but I did it, just to relieve my mind and make believe I was doin' as the minister told me. If they was all like Mr. Fuller, I don't know as I should ha' the heart to say such agen them."

"So it's Mr. Fuller's church you've been going to? I'm so glad! How often has he service then?"

"Every day, miss. Think o' that. It don't take long though, as I tell you. But why should it? If there is any good in talking at all, it comes more of being the right thing than the muchness of it, as my old father used to say—for he was in the business afore me, miss, though I saw a great deal more o' the world than ever he did afore I took to it myself—says he, 'It strikes me, Jacob, there's more for your money in some o' those eighteen mos, if you could only read 'em, than in some o' them elephants. I ha' been a watchin',' says he, 'the sort o' man that

buys the one and that buys the tother. When a little man with a shabby coat brings in off the stall one o' them sixpenny books in Latin, that looks so barbarious to me, and pops it pleased like into the tail of his coat—as if he meant to have it out again the minute he was out of the shop—then I thinks there's something in that little book—and something in that little man,' says father, miss. And so I stick up for the sermons and the little prayers, miss. I've been thinking about it since; and I think Mr. Fuller's right about the short prayers. They're much more after the manner of the Lord's Prayer anyhow. I never heard of any body getting tired before *that* was over. As you are fond of church, miss, you'd better drop into Mr. Fuller's to-morrow mornin'. If you go once, you'll go again."

Long after, Lucy told Mr. Fuller what the book-seller had said, and it made him think yet again whether our long prayers—*services*, as we call them forsooth—are not all a mistake, and closely allied to the worship of the Pagans, who think they shall be heard for their much speaking.

She went out by the side-door into the archway. As she opened it, a figure sped past her, fleet and silent. She started back. Why should it remind her of Thomas? She had scarcely seen more in the darkness than a deeper darkness in motion, for she came straight from the light.

She found the door not as she left it.

"Has Thomas been here, grannie?" she asked, with an alarm she could not account for.

"No, indeed. He has favored us with little of his company this many a day," answered grannie, speaking out of the feelings which had gradually grown from the seeds sown by Stopper. "The sooner you're off with him, my dear, the better for you!" she continued. "He's no good, I doubt."

With a terrible sinking at the heart, Lucy heard her grandmother's words. But she would fight Thomas's battles to the last.

"If ever that man dares to say a word against Thomas in my hearing," she said, "I'll—I'll—I'll leave the room."

O most lame and impotent conclusion! But Lucy carried it farther than her words; for when Mr. Stopper entered the next morning, with a face scared into the ludicrous, she, without even waiting to hear what he had to say, though she foreboded evil, rose at once and left the room. Mr. Stopper stood and looked after her in dismayed admiration; for Lucy was one of those few whose anger even is of such an unslush and unspiteful nature, that it gives a sort of piquancy to their beauty.

"I hope I haven't offended the young lady," said Mr. Stopper, with some concern.

"Never you mind, Mr. Stopper. I've been giving her a hint about Thomas, and she's not got over it yet. Never you mind her. It's me you've got to do with, and I 'aint got no fancies."

"It's just as well, perhaps, that she did walk herself away," said Mr. Stopper.

"You've got some news, Mr. Stopper. Sit ye down. Will you have a cup o' tea?"

"No, thank you.—Where's the keys, Mrs. Boxall?"

The old lady looked up at the wall, then back at Mr. Stopper.

"Why, go along! There they are in your own hand."

"Yes; but where do you think I found them?—Hanging in the door of the safe, and all the money gone from the cash-box. I haven't got over the shock of it yet."

"Why, good heavens! Mr. Stopper," said the old lady, who was rather out of temper with both herself and Lucy, "you don't think *I've* been a robbing of your cash-box, do you?"

Mr. Stopper laughed aloud.

"Well, ma'am, that would be a roundabout way of coming by your own. I don't think we could make out a case against you, if you had. Not quite. But, seriously, who came into the house after I left? I hung the keys on that wall with my own hands."

"And I saw them there when I went to bed," said Mrs. Boxall, making a general impression ground for an individual assertion.

"Then somebody must have come in after you had gone to bed—some one that knew the place. Did you find the street door had been tampered with?"

"Lucy opened it this morning."

Mrs. Boxall went to the door and called her grand-daughter. Lucy came, thinking Mr. Stopper must be gone. When she saw him there, she would have left the room again, but her grandmother interfered.

"Come here, child," she said, peremptorily.

"Was the house-door open when you went down this morning?"

Lucy felt her face grow pale with the vaguest foreboding—associated with the figure which had run through the archway and her finding the door open. But she kept her self-command.

"No, grannie. The door was shut as usual."

"Did nobody call last night?" asked Mr. Stopper, who had his suspicions, and longed to have them confirmed, in order to pay off old scores at once.

"Nobody; that I'll give my word for," answered Mrs. Boxall.

"A most unaccountable thing, ladies," said Stopper, rubbing his forehead as if he would fain rouse an idea in his baffled brain.

"Have you lost much money?" asked the old lady.

"Oh, it's not the money; that's a flea-bite. But justice, you know—that's the point," said Mr. Stopper, with his face full of meaning.

"Do you suspect any one, Mr. Stopper?"

"I do. I found something on the floor. If Mr. Worboise were come," he continued, looking hard at Lucy, "he might be able to help us out with it. Sharp fellow that! But it's an hour past his time, and he's not made his appearance yet. I fear he's been taking to fast ways lately. I'll just go across the court to Mr. Molken, and see if he knows any thing about him."

"You'll oblige *me*," said Lucy, who was cold to the very heart, but determined to keep up, "by doing nothing of the sort. I will not have his name mentioned in the matter. Does any one but yourself know of the—the robbery, Mr. Stopper?"

"Not a soul, miss. I wouldn't do any thing till I had been to you. I was here first, as I generally am."

"Then if I am to have any thing to say at all," she returned with dignity, "let the matter rest

in the mean time—at least till you have some certainty. If you don't, you will make suspicion fall on the innocent. It might have been grannie or myself for any thing you can tell yet."

"Highty-tighty, lass!" said her grandmother. "We're on our high horse, I believe."

Before she could say more, however, Lucy had left the room. She just managed to reach her bed, and fell fainting upon it.

Money had evidently, even in the shadow it cast before it, wrought no good effect upon old Mrs. Boxall. The bond between her and her grand-daughter was already weakened. She had never spoken thus to her till now.

"Never you mind what the wench says," she went on to Stopper. "The money's none of hers, and shan't be except I please. You just do as you think proper, Mr. Stopper. If that young vagabond has taken the money, why you take him, and see what the law will say to it. The sooner our Lucy is shut of him the better for her—and may be for you too, Mr. Stopper," added the old lady, looking insinuatingly at him.

But whether the head clerk had any design upon Lucy or not, he seemed to think that her favor was of as much consequence as that of her grandmother. He might have reasoned in this way—that he could not expose Thomas without making Lucy his enemy, both from her regard to him and because of the disgrace that would come upon her by having her name associated with his; and Mrs. Boxall was old, and Lucy might take her place any day in the course of nature. Whereas so long as he kept the secret and strengthened the conclusions against Thomas without divulging them, he had a hold over Lucy, even a claim upon her gratitude, he would say, which he might employ as he saw occasion, and as prudence should direct, holding his revenge still ready in his hands in case there should be nothing to be gained by foregoing it. Therefore, when the clerk in whose charge the money-box was, opened it, he found in it only a ticket with Mr. Stopper's initials and the sum abstracted in figures, by which it was implied that Mr. Stopper had taken the contents for his own use. So, although it seemed queer that he should have emptied it of the whole sum, even to the few coppers, there was nothing to be said, and hardly any thing to be conjectured even.

As Thomas did not make his appearance all day, not a doubt remained upon Mr. Stopper's mind that he had committed the robbery. But he was so well acquainted with the minutest details of the business that he knew very well that the firm was the gainer by Thomas's absconding as nearly as possible to the same amount that he had taken. This small alleviation of Thomas's crime, however, Mr. Stopper took no pains to communicate to Lucy, chuckling only over his own good fortune in getting rid of him so opportunely; for he would no longer stand in his way, even if he were to venture on making advances to Lucy: she could never have any thing more to do with a fellow who could be tried for burglary if he chose to apply for a warrant for his apprehension.

Intending that his forbearance should have the full weight of obedience to her wishes, Mr. Stopper went in the evening after the counting-house was closed, Lucy was not there. She

had not left her room since the morning, and the old woman's tenderness had revived a little.

"Perhaps you'd better not hang them keys up there, Mr. Stopper. I don't care about the blame of them. I've had enough of it. There's Lucey, poor dear, lying on her bed like a dead thing; and neither bit nor sup passed her lips all day. Take your keys away with you, Mr. Stopper. I'll have nothing more to do wi' them, I can tell you. And don't you go and take away that young man's character, Mr. Stopper."

"Indeed I should be very sorry, Mrs. Boxall. He hasn't been here all day, but I haven't even made a remark on his absence to any one about the place."

"That's very right, Mr. Stopper. The young gentleman may be at home with a headache."

"Very likely," answered Mr. Stopper, dryly. "Good-night, Mrs. Boxall. And as the keys must have an unpleasant look after what has happened, I'll just put them in my pocket and take them home with me."

"Do ye that, Mr. Stopper. And good-night to you. And if the young man comes back tomorrow, don't ee take no notice of what's come and gone. If you're sure he took it, you can keep it off his salary, with a wink for a warning, you know."

"All right, ma'am," said Mr. Stopper, taking his departure in less good humor than he showed.

I will not say much about Lucey's feelings. For some time she was so stunned by the blow as to be past conscious suffering. Then commenced a slow oscillation of feeling: for one half hour, unknown to her as time, she would be declaring him unworthy of occasioning her trouble; for the next she would be acensing his attachment to her, and her own want of decision in not absolutely refusing to occupy the questionable position in which she found herself, as the combined causes of his ruin; for as ruin she could not but regard such a fall as his. She had no answer to her letter—heard nothing of him all day, and in the evening her grandmother brought her the statement of Mr. Stopper that Thomas had not been there. She turned her face away toward the wall, and her grandmother left her, grumbling at girls generally, and girls in love especially. Meantime a cherub was on its way toward her, bearing a little bottle of comfort under its wing.

CHAPTER XXXV.

MATTIE FALLS AND RISES AGAIN.

MATTIE had expected Lucey to call for her in the forenoon and take her out to Wyvil Place to see Miriam. Spending the morning with her father in the shop, amidst much talk, conducted with the most respectful docility on the part of the father, and a good deal of condescending assercion on the part of the child, she had run out twenty times to look at the clock at St. Jacob's; and at length, finding that Lucey did not come, had run up and knocked at her door, giving Mr. Spelt a promissory nod as she passed. Hearing from Mrs. Boxall, however, that Miss Burton was too tired to go out with her, she turned in some disappointment, and sought Mr. Spelt.

"Well, mother, how do you do?" she asked,

perking up her little grey face, over which there was now a slight wash of rose-color, toward the watch-tower of the tailor.

"Quite well, Mattie. And you look well," answered Mr. Spelt.

"And I am well, I assure you; better than I ever expected to be in this world, mother. I mean to come up beside you a bit. I want to tell you something."

"I don't know, Mattie," answered Mr. Spelt with some embarrassment. "Is it any thing in particular?"

"In particular! Well, I should think so," returned Mattie, with a triumph just dashed with displeasre, for she had not been accustomed to any hesitation in accepting her advances on the part of Mr. Spelt. "I should think so." Then lowering her voice to a keen whisper, she added, "I've been to see God in his own house."

"Been to church, have you?" said Mr. Spelt. Now I am sorry to say that Spelt was behaving dishonestly—not from choice, but from embarrassment and fear springing from a false conscientiousness. And Mattie felt at once that Mr. Spelt was not behaving like himself.

"No, Mr. Spelt," she answered with dignity—bridling indeed; "I've not been to church. You don't call that God's house, do you? *Them!* They're nothing but little shops like your own, Mr. Spelt. But God's house!—Take me up, I say. Don't make me shout such things in the open street."

Thus adjured, Mr. Spelt could stand out no longer. He stooped over his threshold and lifted Mattie toward him. But the moment her head reached the level of his floor, she understood it all. In her old place in the corner sat the little demoniac Poppie, clothed and in her right mind. A true observer, however, would have seen from her pale thin face, that possibly her quietude was owing more to weakness than to any revolution in her nature.

"Well!" said Mattie, with hauteur. "Will you set me down again, if you please, Mr. Spelt."

"I think, perhaps," said the tailor meekly, holding the child still suspended in the air, "I could find room for you both. The corner opposite the door there, Mattie," he added, looking round suggestively in the direction of the spot signified.

"Put me down," insisted Mattie, in such a tone that Mr. Spelt dared not keep her in suspense any longer, but lowered her gently to the ground. All the time Poppie had been staring with great black eyes, which seemed to have grown much larger during her illness, and, of course, saying nothing.

As soon as the soles of Mattie's feet touched the ground, she seemed to gather strength like Antæus; for instead of turning and walking away, with her head as high, morally considered, as that of any giant, she began to parley with the offending Mr. Spelt.

"I have heard, mother—Mr. Spelt—that you should be off with the old love before you're on with the new. You never told me what you were about."

"But you was away from home, Mattie."

"You could have written. It would only have cost a penny. I shouldn't have minded paying it."

"Well, Mattie, shall I turn Poppie out?"

"Oh! I don't want you to turn her out. You would say I drove her to the streets again."

"Do you remember, Mattie, that you wouldn't go to that good lady's house because she didn't ask Poppie too? Do you?"

A moment's delay in the child's answer revealed shame. But she was ready in a moment.

"Hers is a big house. That's my own very corner."

"Don't you see how ill Poppie is?"

"Well!" said the hard little thing, with a side nod of her head over the speaking corner of her mouth.

Mr. Spelt began to be a little vexed. He took the upper hand now and came home to her. She was turning to go away, when he spoke in a tone that stopped her. But she stood with her back half turned toward him.

"Mattie, do you remember the story Somebody told us about the ragged boy that came home again, and how his brother, with the good clothes on, was offended, and wouldn't go in because he thought he was taking his place? You're behaving just the same as the brother with the good clothes."

"I don't know that. There's some difference, I'm sure. I don't think you're telling the story right. I don't think there's any thing about taking his place. I'll just go and look. I can read it for myself, Mr. Spelt."

So saying, Mattie walked away to the house, with various backward tosses of the head. Mr. Spelt drew his head into his shell, troubled at Mattie's naughtiness. Poppie stared at him, but said nothing, for she had nothing to say.

When Mattie entered the shop, her father saw that something was amiss with her.

"What's the matter with my princess?" he asked.

"Oh, nothing much," answered Mattie, with tears in her eyes. "I shall get over it, I dare say.—Mr. Spelt has been very naughty," she added in a somewhat defiant tone; and before her father could say any thing more she had reached the stairs, and went to her own room.

My reader must imagine her now taking down a huge family Bible her father had given her for the sake of the large print. She lugs it along and heaves it upon her bed; then, by a process known only to herself, finds the place, and begins to spell out the story once more, to discover whether the tailor has not garbled it to her condemnation. But, as she reads, the story itself lays hold upon her little heart, and she finds a far deeper condemnation there than she had found in her friend's reproof. About half an hour after, she ran—Mattie seldom ran—past Mr. Spelt and Poppie, not venturing to look up, though, ere she came too near, the tailor could see the red eyes in the white face, and knocked at Mrs. Boxall's door.

Lucy was still lying on her bed when she heard little knuckles at her door, and having answered without looking round, felt, a moment after, a tiny hand steal into hers. She opened her eyes, and saw Mattie by her bedside. Nor was she too much absorbed in her own griefs to note that the child had hers too.

"What is the matter with you, Mattie, my dear?" she asked in a faint voice.

Mattie burst into tears—a rare proceeding

with the princess. It was some moments before she could sob out—

"I've been so naughty, Miss Burton—so very naughty!"

Lucy raised herself, sat on the side of the bed, and took the child's hand. Mattie could not look up.

"I'm sorry to hear that, Mattie. What have you done?"

"Such a shame!—Poppie! Far country. Elder brother."

These were almost the only words Lucy could hear for the sobs of the poor child. Hence she could only guess at the cause of her grief, and her advice must be general.

"If you have done wrong to Poppie, or any one, you must go and tell her so, and try to make up for it."

"Yes, I will, for I can't bear it," answered Mattie, beginning to recover herself. "Think of doing the very same as the one I was so angry with when mother read the story! I couldn't bear to see Poppie in my place in mother's shop, and I was angry, and wouldn't go in. But I'll go now, as soon as I get my poor eyes dried."

Lucy was not able to say much to her, and Mattie was so taken up with her own repentance that she did not see that Lucy was in trouble too. In a few minutes the child announced her intention of going to Mr. Spelt at once, and left Lucy to her own thoughts. I will first tell how Mattie finished her repentance, and then return to Lucy.

She walked right under Mr. Spelt's door, and called aloud, but with a wavering voice—

"Mother, take me up directly. I'm very sorry."

Over the threshold came a pair of arms, and Mattie was hoisted into the heaven of her repentant desire. As soon as she was in it she crawled on her hands and knees—even she could scarcely have stood in the place—toward Poppie.

"How do you do, prodigal?" she said, putting her arms round the bewildered Poppie, who had no more idea of what she meant than a child born in heaven would have had. "I'm very glad to see you home again. Put on this ring, and we'll both be good children to mother there."

So saying, she took a penny ring, with a bit of red and two bits of green glass in it, from her finger, and put it upon Poppie's, who submitted speechless, but was pleased with the glitter of the toy. She did not kiss in return, though: Poppie liked to be kissed, but she had not learned to kiss yet.

"Mother," Mattie went on, "I was behaving like—like—like—a wicked Pharisee and Sadducee. I beg your pardon, mother. I will be good. May I sit in the corner by the door?"

"I think," answered the little tailor, greatly moved, and believing in the wind that bloweth where it listeth more than ever he had believed before—"I think if I were to move a little, you could sit in the corner by the window, and then you would see into the court better. Only," he said, as he drew his work about his new position, "you must not lean much against the sash, for it is not very sound, and you might tumble in the court, you know."

So Mattie and Poppie sat side by side, and the heart of the tailor had a foretaste of heaven.

Presently Mattie began to talk to Poppie. She could scarcely, however, draw a single re-

sponse from her, for she had nothing to say. Interchange of thought was unknown to the elder child, and Mattie's words were considerably less intelligible to Poppie than the autumn wind that now blew round their nest. Mattie was annoyed. The romance of the reconciliation was dimmed. Instinctively she felt that the only way to restore it was to teach Poppie, and she took her in hand at once.

There was more hope for Poppie, and Spelt too, now that Mattie was in the work, for there is no teacher of a child like a child. All the tutors of Oxford and Cambridge will not bring on a baby as a baby a year older will. The child-like is as essential an element in the teacher as in the scholar. And the train of my story is not going so fast but that I may pull up at this siding for a moment to say that those who believe they have found a higher truth, with its higher mode of conveyance, are very apt to err in undervaluing, even to the degree of wishing to remove the lower forms in which truth, if not embodied exactly, is at least wrapt up. Truth may be presented in the grandeur of a marble statue, or in a brown-paper parcel. I choose the sculpture; my last son prefers the parcel. The only question is whether there is truth—not in the abstract, but as assimilable by the recipient—present in the form. I can not, however, resume without a word on the other side. To the man who sees and feels the higher and nobler form, it is given to teach *that*. Let those to whom the lower represents the sum of things, teach it with their whole hearts. *He* has nothing to do with it, for he can not teach it without being false. The snare of the devil holds men who, capable of teaching the higher, talk of the people not being ready to receive it, and therefore teach them in forms which are to their own souls an obstruction. There is cowardice and desertion in it. They leave their own harder and higher work to do the easier and clumsier work of their neighbor. It is wasteful of time, truth, and energy. The man who is most careful over the truth that lies in forms not his own, will be the man most careful to let no time-serving drag him down—not to the level of the lower teachers, for they are honest—but to the level of Job's friends, who lied for God; nay, lower still; for this will soon cease to be lying even for God, and become lying for himself.

When Mattie left her, Lucy again threw herself down, and turned her face to the wall, and the story of which Mattie had been talking straightway began to mingle with all that filled her troubled mind. For who was a prodigal son but her lost Thomas? Lost indeed! But there was another word in the parable to balance that—there was *found* as well. Thomas might be found again. And if the angels in heaven rejoiced over the finding of such a lost wanderer, why should she cut the cable of Love, and let him go adrift from her heart? Might she not love him still? Ought she not to love him still? Was he not more likely to come back some day if she went on loving him? The recent awaking of Lucy's spiritual nature—what would be called by some, her conversion—had been so interpenetrated with the image, the feeling, the subjective presence of Thomas—she had thought so much of him while stooping her own shoulders to the easy yoke, that she could not leave him out now, and it

seemed as if, were she to give him up, she would lose half the incentive to press forward herself. The fibres of her growth had so twined around him, that if the idea of his regeneration departed from her, the hope of her own would sicken at least, if not die. True, Pride hinted at the disgrace of being allied to such a man—a man who had stolen; but Faith replied, that if there were joy in heaven over him, she too might rejoice over him when he came back; and if the Father received the prodigal with all his heart, she too might receive him with all hers. But she would have no right to receive him thus if she did nothing to restore him; nor would she have any right to put forth in full her reclaiming influence except she meant thus to receive him. Her conscience began to reproach her that she had not before done all that she could to reclaim him, and if she only knew the way, she was now at least prepared to spend and be spent for him. But she had already done all that she was, at this juncture of his history, to be allowed to do for the wretched trifter. God had taken the affair out of her hands, and had put it into those of somewhat harder teachers.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

BUSINESS.

WHEN Mr. Worboise found that Thomas did not return that night, he concluded at once that he had made up his mind to thwart him in his now cherished plan, to refuse the daughter of Sir Jonathan Hubbard, and marry the girl whom his father disliked. He determined at once, even supposing he might be premature as regarded the property, to have the satisfaction of causing the Boxalls sharp uneasiness at least. His son would not have dared to go against his wishes but for the enticements of "that mix," in the confidence that her uncle's property was about to be hers. He would teach her, and him too, a lesson. Either her uncle or some one or more of his family were not drowned, or they were all drowned: in neither case was the property hers. If one of the family was alive, the property remained where it was; if they were all gone, the property was his. He thought himself into a rage over her interference with his plans, judged himself an injured person, and thereby freed of any trifling obligation that a fastidious conscience might have fancied to exist to the prejudice of his claims upon the property of his friend, supposed to be deceased. He was now ready to push his rights to the uttermost—to exact the pound of flesh that the law awarded him. He went the next morning but one after Thomas's disappearance and propounded the will.

In due time this came to the knowledge of Mr. Sargent. He wrote to Mrs. Boxall a stiff business letter acquainting her with the fact, and then called upon Mr. Worboise to see whether some arrangement could not be come to; for having learned the nature of the will, he saw that almost any decent division of the property, for which he could only appeal to the justice of the man, would be better than a contest. Mr. Worboise received him with a graciousness reaching almost to kindness, talked lightly of the whole

as a mere matter of business about which there was no room for disputing, smiled aside at every attempt made by Mr. Sargent to approach the subject from another quarter, and made him understand, without saying a word to that effect, that he was prepared to push matters to the extreme of extremity. He even allowed him to see that he had reasons beyond the value of the money for setting about the matter in the coolest, most legal fashion in the world. Mr. Sargent went away baffled—to devise upon what ground he could oppose the grant of probate.

While Mr. Sargent was having his interview, Mr. Stopper was awaiting his departure in the clerk's room. It must be remembered that Mr. Stopper was now between two stools; and while he came to plead the cause of the widow and fatherless, he must be especially careful for his own sake not to give offense. Him, too, Mr. Worboise received with the greatest good humor; assured him that there was no mistake in the matter, and he believed no flaw in the will; informed him that he had drawn it up himself, and had, at his friend's request, entered his own name as contingent reversioner. His friend might have done it in joke, he did not know; but he had not any intention of foregoing his rights, or turning out of Luck's way when she met him in the teeth. On the contrary, he meant to have the money and to use it: for, at all events, it could not have been in joke that his friend had omitted his mother and his niece. He must have had some good reason for so doing; and he was not one to treat a dead friend's feeling with disrespect—and so on, all in pleasant words and with smiling delivery, ended by a hearty, easy "good-morning." For, ere he had finished, Mr. Stopper coming to the conclusion that nothing was to be done, rose to take his leave. At the door he turned, and said—

"I hope nothing is amiss with your son, Mr. Worboise. I hope he is not ill."

"Why do you ask?" returned Mr. Worboise, just a little staggered; for he was not prepared to hear that Thomas was missing from Bagot Street as well as from home. When he heard the fact, however, he merely nodded his head, saying—

"Well, Mr. Stopper, he's too old for me to horsewhip him. I don't know what the young rascal is after. I leave him in your hands. That kind of thing won't do, of course. I don't know that it wouldn't be the best thing to discharge him. It's of no consequence to me, you know, and it would be a lesson to him, the young scape-grace! That's really going too far, though you and I can make allowances, eh, Stopper?"

Mr. Stopper was wise enough not to incur the odium of a Job's messenger by telling what even Mr. Worboise would have considered bad news; for he had a reverence for locks and money, and regarded any actionable tampering with either as disgraceful. "Besides," thought Stopper, "if it was only to spite the young jack-anapes, I could almost marry that girl without a farthing. But I shouldn't have a chance if I were to leak about Tom."

Mr. Worboise was uneasy, though. He told his wife the sum of what had passed between Tom and himself, but I fear enjoyed her discomfiture at the relation; for he said spitefully, as he left her room—

"Shall I call on Mr. Simon as I go to town, and send him up, Mrs. Worboise?"

His wife buried her face in her pillow, and made no reply. Perhaps the husband's heart smote him; but I doubt it, though he did call on Mr. Simon and send him to her.

All the result of Mr. Simon's inquiries was the discovery that Thomas had vanished from the counting-house too. Thereupon a more real grief than she had ever known seized the mother's heart; her conscience reproached her as often as Mr. Simon hinted that it was a judgment upon her for having been worldly in her views concerning her son's marriage; and she sent for Amy home, and allowed things to take their way.

All the comfort Mr. Worboise took was to say to himself over and over, "The young rascal's old enough to take care of himself. He knows what he's about too. He thinks to force me to a surrender by starving me of his precious self. We'll see. I've no doubt he's harbored in that old woman's house. Stay a bit, and if I don't fire him out—by Jove! She'll find I'm not one to take liberties with, the old hag!"

The best that Mr. Sargent could do at present was to resist probate on the ground of the uncertainty of the testator's death, delaying thus the execution of the will. He had little hope, however, of any ultimate success—except such as he might achieve by shaming Mr. Worboise into an arrangement.

Mrs. Boxall sent for him, and with many acknowledgments begged him to do his best for them, saying that, if he were successful, she would gladly pay him whatever he demanded. Her repudiated all idea of payment, however, and indeed considered himself only too fortunate to be permitted to call as often as he pleased, for then he generally saw Lucy. But he never made the smallest attempt to renew even the slight intimacy which had formerly existed between them.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

MR. SARGENT LABORS.

THAT large room in Guild Court, once so full of aged cheerfulness and youthful hope, was now filled with an atmosphere of both moral and spiritual perturbation. The first effect of her son's will upon Mrs. Boxall was rage and indignation against Mr. Worboise, who, she declared, must have falsified it. She would not believe that Richard could have omitted her name, and put in that of his attorney. The moment she heard the evil tidings, she rose and went for her bonnet, with the full intention of giving "the rascal a bit of her mind." It was all that her grand-daughter and Mr. Stopper could do to prevent her. For some time she would yield no ear to their representations of the bad consequences of such a proceeding. She did not care. If there was justice to be had on the earth she would have it, if she went to the Queen herself to get it. I half suspect that, though she gave in at last, she did carry out her intention afterward without giving any one the chance of preventing her. However that may be, the paroxysm of her present rage passed off in tears, followed by gloomy fits, which were diversified by outbreaks of tem-

per against Lucy, although she spoke of her as a poor dear orphan reduced to beggary by the wickedness and greed of lawyers in general, who lived like cannibals upon the flesh and blood of innocents. In vain would Lucy try to persuade her that they were no worse now than they had been, reminding her that they were even happier together before the expectation of more than plenty came in to trouble them; beside her late imagination of wealth, her present feeling was that of poverty, and to feel poor is surely the larger half of being poor.

On Lucy my reader will easily believe that this change of prospect had little effect. Her heart was too much occupied with a far more serious affair to be moved about money. Had every thing been right with Thomas, I have no doubt she would have built many a castle of the things she would do; but till Thomas was restored to her by being brought to his right mind, no one thing seemed more worth doing than another. Sadness settled upon her face, her walk, her speech, her whole expression. But she went about her work as before, and did what she could to keep her sorrow from hurting others. The reality of the late growth of religious feeling in her was severely tested; but it stood the test; for she sought comfort in holding up her care to God; and what surer answer to such prayer could there be, than that she had strength to do her work? We are saved by hope, and Lucy's hope never died; or if it did wither away under the dry blasts of her human judgment, the prayers that went up for submission to His will, soon returned in such dews as caused the little flower once more to lift its head in the sun and wind. As often as she could—not every day, because of her engagements with Miriam Morgenstern—she went to Mr. Fuller's church, and I think I may say that she never returned without what was worth going for. I do not say that she could always tell what she had learned, but she came away with fresh strength, and fresh resolution to do what might show itself to be right. And the strength came chiefly from this, that she believed more and more what the apostle Peter came to be so sure of before he died, that "He careth for us." She believed that the power that made her a living soul was not, could not be, indifferent to her sorrows, however much she might have deserved them, still less indifferent because they were for her good—a ready excuse for indifference with men—and if only he cared that she suffered, if he knew that it was sad and hard to bear, she could bear it without a word, almost without a thought of restlessness. And then, why should she not hope for Thomas as well as for herself? If we are to love our neighbor as ourself, surely we must hope and pray for him as for ourself; and if Lucy found that she could love Thomas at least as herself, for him she was in that very love bound to pray and to hope as for herself.

Mr. Sargent was soon thoroughly acquainted with all Mrs. Boxall's affairs. And he had so little hope of success in regard to the will, that, when he found that she had no vouchers to produce for her own little property placed in her son's hands, he resolved, before going any farther in a course which must irritate Mr. Worboise, to see whether he could not secure that first. Indeed he was prepared, seeing how ill matters

looked for his clients, to offer to withdraw from the contest, provided the old lady's rights were acknowledged. With this view he called once more upon Mr. Worboise, who received him just as graciously as before. A conversation something like this followed:

"Mrs. Boxall informs me, Mr. Worboise, that her son, at the time of his death, was, and had been for many years, in possession of some property of hers, amounting to somewhere between two and three thousand pounds. The old lady is a very simple woman—"

"Is she?" interjected, rather than interrupted, Mr. Worboise, in a cold parenthesis. Mr. Sargent went on.

"Indeed she does not know the amount exactly, but that could be easily calculated from the interest he was in the habit of paying her."

"But whatever acknowledgment she holds for the money will render the trouble unnecessary," said Mr. Worboise, who saw well enough to what Mr. Sargent was coming.

"Unfortunately—it was very wrong of a man of business, or any body, indeed—her son never gave her any acknowledgment in writing."

"Oh!" said Mr. Worboise, with a smile, "then I don't exactly see what can be done. It is very awkward."

"You can be easily satisfied of the truth of the statement."

"I am afraid not, Mr. Sargent."

"She is a straightforward old lady, and—"

"I have reason to doubt it. At all events, seeing she considers the whole of the property hers by right, an opinion in which you sympathize with her—as her legal adviser I mean—it will not be very surprising if, from my point of view, I should be jealous of her making a statement for the sake of securing a part of those *rights*. With such a temptation, and such an excuse, it is just possible—I've heard of such a thing as evil that good might come, eh, Mr. Sargent?—even if she were as straightforward as you think her. Let her produce her vouchers, I say."

"I have no fear—at least I hope Mr. Stopper will be able to prove it. There will be evidence enough of the interest paid."

"As interest, Mr. Sargent? I suspect it will turn out to be only an annuity that the good fellow allowed her, notwithstanding the reasons he must have had for omitting her name from his will."

"I confess this much to you, Mr. Worboise—that our cause is so far from promising that I should advise Mrs. Boxall to be content with her own, and push the case no farther."

"Quite right, Mr. Sargent. The most prudent advice you can give her."

"You will then admit the debt, and let the good woman have her own?"

"Admit the debt by no means; but certainly let her have her own as soon as she proves what is her own," answered Mr. Worboise, smiling.

"But I give you my word, Mr. Worboise," said Mr. Sargent, doing his best to keep his temper, "that I believe the woman's statement to be perfectly true."

"I believe you, Mr. Sargent, but I do not believe the woman," returned Mr. Worboise, again smiling.

"But you know it will not matter much, because, coming into this property as you do, you

can hardly avoid making some provision for those so nearly related to the testator, and who were dependent upon him during his life-time. You can not leave the old lady to starve."

"It will be time enough to talk about that when my rights are acknowledged. Till then I decline to entertain the question."

There was a something in Mr. Worboise's manner, and an irrepressible flash of his eye, that all but convinced Mr. Sargent that there was nothing not in the bond to be got from him. He therefore left him, and started a new objection in opposing the probate of the will. He argued the probability of all or one or other of the daughters surviving the father—that is, not of their being yet alive, but of their having outlived him. Now this question, though plain as the alphabet to those who are acquainted with law, requires some explanation to those who are not, numbering possibly the greater part of my readers.

The property would come to Mr. Worboise only in the case of all those mentioned in the will dying before Mr. Boxall. A man can only will that which is his own at the time of his death. If he died before any of his family, Mr. Worboise had nothing to do with it. It went after the survivor's death to *her* heirs. Hence if either of the daughters survived father and mother, if only for one provable moment, the property would be hers, and would go to her heir, namely, her grandmother. So it would in any case, had not Mr. Worboise been mentioned, except Mrs. Richard Boxall had survived her husband and family, in which case the money would have gone to her nearest of kin. This alternative, however, was not started, for both sides had an equal interest in opposing it—and indeed the probable decision upon probabilities would have been that the wife would die first. The whole affair then turned upon the question: whether it was more likely that Richard Boxall or every one of his daughters died first; in which question it must be remembered that there was nothing cumulative in the three daughters. He was as likely to die before or to survive all three as any one of them, except individual reasons could be shown in regard to one daughter which did not exist in regard to another.

One word more is necessary. Mr. Sargent was not in good practice and would scarcely have been able—I do not use the word *afforded* because I do not know what it means—to meet the various expenses of the plea. But the very day he had become acquainted with the contents of the will, he told Mr. Morgenstern of the peculiar position in which his governess and her grandmother found themselves. Now Mr. Morgenstern was not only rich—that is common; nor was he only aware that he was rich; if that is not so common, it is not yet very uncommon; but he felt that he had something to spare. Lucy was a great favorite with him; so was Sargent. He could not but see that Sargent was fond of Lucy, and that he was suffering from some measure of repulse. He therefore hoped, if not to be of any material assistance to Lucy, for from Sargent's own representation he could not see that the matter was a promising one, at least to give the son of his old friend a chance of commending himself to the lady by putting it in his power to plead her cause. And conducted as Mr. Sargent conduct-

ed the affair, it did not put Mr. Morgenstern to an amount of expense that cost him two thoughts; while even if it had been serious, the pleasure with which his wife regarded his generosity would have been to him reward enough.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

HOW THOMAS DID AND FARED.

I FLATTER myself that my reader is not very much interested in Thomas: I never meant that he should be yet. I confess, however, that I am now girding up my loins with the express intention of beginning to interest him if I can. For I have now almost reached the point of his history which I myself feel to verge on the interesting. When a worthless fellow begins to meet with his deserts, then we begin to be aware that after all he is our own flesh and blood. Our human heart begins to feel just the least possible yearning toward him. We hope he will be well trounced, but we become capable of hoping that it may not be lost upon him. At least we are content to hear something more about him.

When Thomas left the gambling-house that dreary morning, he must have felt very much as the devil must feel. For he had plenty of money and no home. He had actually, on this raw morning when nature seemed to be nothing but a drizzle diluted with grey fog, nowhere to go to. More, indeed; he had a good many places, including the principal thoroughfares of London, where he must not go. There was one other place which he did all he could to keep out of, and that was the place where the little thinking that was considered necessary in his establishment was carried on. He could not help peeping in at the window, however, and now and then putting his ear to the key-hole. And what did he hear? That he, Thomas Worboise, gentleman, was a thief, a coward, a sneak. Now, when Thomas heard this, for the first time in his life, his satisfaction with himself gave way utterly; nor could all his admiration for Lara or the Corsair—I really forget whether they are not one and the same phantom—reconcile him to becoming one of the fraternity. The Corsair at least would not have sold Medora's ring to save his life. Up to this point, he had never seen himself contemptible. Nor even now could he feel it much, for, weary and sick, all he wanted was some place to lay down his head and go to sleep in. After he had slept, he would begin to see things as they were, and, once admitted possible that he could do an ungentlemanly action, fresh accusations from quarters altogether unsuspected of unfriendliness would be lodged in that court of which I have already spoken. But for a time mere animal self-preservation would keep the upper hand. He was conscious of an inclination to dive into every court that he came near—of a proclivity toward the darkness. This was the same Thomas Worboise that used to face the sunshine in gay attire, but never let the sun farther in than his brain; so the darkness within him had come at last to the outside and swathed all in its funeral folds. Till a man's indwelling darkness is destroyed by the deep-going light of truth, he walks in darkness, and the sooner this darkness

comes out in action and shows itself to be darkness, the better for the man. The presence of this darkness, however, is sooner recognized by one man than by another. To one the darkness within him is made manifest by a false compliment he has just paid to a pretty girl; to Thomas it could only be revealed by theft and the actual parting for money with the jewel given him by a girl whom he loved as much as he could love, which was not much—yet; to a third—not murder, perjury, hypocrisy, hanging, will reveal it; he will go into the other world from the end of a rope, not mistaking darkness for light, but knowing that it is what it is, and that it is his, and yet denying the possession of the one, and asserting the possession of the other.

Thomas forgot all about where he was, till suddenly he found himself far west in the Strand. The light of the world was coming nearer; no policeman was in sight; and the archway leading down under the Adelphi yawned like the mouth of hell at his side. He darted into it. But no sooner was he under the arches than he wished himself out again. Strange forms of misery and vice were coming to life here and there in the darkness where they had slept away the night. He was of their sort, yet he did not like his own kin. Nay, some of them might be worthy compared to him, yet he shrunk from them. He rushed out. Heaven was full of lights and hell was full of horrors: where was his own place? His hurried back toward the city.

But as the light grew his terror increased. There was no ground for immediate alarm, for no one yet knew what he had done; and with the light discovery drew nearer. When he reached Farringdon Street he turned down toward Blackfriars Bridge, then eastward again by Earl Street into Thames Street. He felt safer where the streets were narrow, and the houses rose high to shut out the dayspring, which the Lord says to Job he had "caused to know his place, that it might take hold of the ends of the earth," like a napkin, "that the wicked might be shaken out of it." He hurried on, not yet knowing what he was, only seeing revelation at hand clothed in terror. And the end of it was, that he buried his head in the public-house where the mischief of the preceding night had begun, and was glad to lie down in a filthy bed. The ways of transgressors are always hard in the end. Happy they who find them hard in the beginning.

Ill at ease as he was, both in body and mind, he was yet so worn out that he fell fast asleep; and still on the stream of sleep went drifting toward the vengeance that awaited him—the vengeance of seeing himself as he was.

When he woke, it was afternoon. He had to make several efforts before his recollection combined with his observation to tell him where he was. He felt, however, that a horror was coming, and when it came his whole being was crushed before it. It must be confessed, however, that it was the disgrace, and not the sin, that troubled him. But honor, although a poor substitute for honesty or religion, is yet something; and the fear of disgrace is a good sword to hang over the heads of those who need such attendance. Thomas's heart burned like a hot coal with shame. In vain he tried to persuade

himself, in vain he partially succeeded in persuading himself, that he was not himself when he took the money. Allowing whatever excuse might lie in the state to which he had first brought himself, he knew that no defense of that sort would have any influence in restoring him to the position he had lost. He was an outcast. He lay in moveless torture. He knew himself, and he knew his crime; and he knew that himself had committed that crime. Wide awake, he did not think of rising; for the whole world of activity lay beyond the impassable barrier of his shame. There was nothing for him to do, nowhere for him to go. At length he heard voices in the room below him: they were voices he knew; and he was lying over the scene of last night's temptation. He sprang from the bed, hurried on his clothes, crept down the stairs, paid for his lodging at the bar, and went out into the street. He felt sick at the thought of joining them: he had had a surfeit of wickedness.

But he was too near his former haunts; and the officers of justice must be after him. He turned from one narrow street into another, and wandered on till he came where the bowsprit of a vessel projected over a wall across a narrow lane, and he knew by this that he must be near the Thames. The sun was going down, and the friendly darkness was at hand. But he could not rest. He knew nothing of the other side, and it seemed to him therefore that he would be safer there. He would take a boat and be put across. A passage between two houses led toward the river. Probably there were stairs at the end. He turned into the passage. Half a dozen bills were up on the walls. He stopped to look. They all described bodies found in the river. He turned away, and started at the sight of a policeman regarding him from a door three or four yards off. It was a police station. He had all but put his head into the lion's mouth. He had just presence of mind enough to prevent him from running, but not enough to keep his legs steady under him. His very calves seemed to feel the eyes of the policeman burning upon them, and slunk away with a sense of unprotected misery. He passed several stairs before he ventured to look round. Then finding no reason to suppose he was watched, he turned down the next opening, found a boat, and telling the waterman to put him across to Rotherhithe, of which district he just knew the name, sat down in the stern. The man rowed up the river. The sun was going down behind the dome of St. Paul's, which looked like the round shoulder of a little hill; and all the brown masts and spars of the vessels shone like a forest of gold-barked trees in winter. The dark river caught the light, and threw it shimmering up on the great black hulls, which shone again in the water below; and the Thames, with all its dirt and all its dead, looked radiant. But Thomas felt nothing of its beauty. If Nature had ever had a right of way in his heart, she was now shut out. What was it to him, dispersed in his own eyes, that the sun shone? He looked up at the sky only to wish for the night. What was it to him that the world was for a moment gay, even into the heart of London? Its smile could not reach his heart: it needs an atmosphere as well as a sun to make

light. The sun was in the heavens, yea, the central sun of truth shone upon the universe; but there was no atmosphere of truth in Thomas's world to be lighted up by it; or if there was, it was so filled with smoke and vapor that for the time the sun could not make it smile. As they passed under a towering hull, he envied a monkey that went scrambling out of one of the port-holes and in at another. And yet the scene around was as strange as it was beautiful. The wide river, the many vessels, the multitudinous wilderness of grey houses on every side, all disorder to the eye, yet blended by the air and the light and the thin fog into a marvelous whole; the occasional vista of bridge-arches; the line of London Bridge lying parallel with the lines of green and grey and gold in the sky—its people, its horses, its carriages creeping like insects athwart the sunset—one of the arches cut across near the top by the line of a new railway-bridge, and the segment filled with a moving train; all this light and life to the eye, while, save for the splash of the oars, and the general hum like an aroma of sound that filled the air, all was still to the ear—none of it reached the heart of oosteat Thomas.

Soon, as if by magic, the scene changed. The boatman had been rowing up the river, keeping in the quiet water as the tide hurried out. Now he was crossing toward Cherry Garden Stairs. As they drew near the Surrey-side, all at once Thomas found himself in the midst of a multitude of boats, flitting about like water-flies on the surface of a quiet pool. What they were about he could not see. Now they would gather in dense masses, in every imaginable position to each other, the air filled with shouting, objurgation, expostulation, and good-humored chaff, varied with abuse. Again they would part asunder and vanish over the wide space. Guns were firing, flags were flying, Thames liveries gleaming here and there. The boats were full of men, women, and children; some in holiday garments, most of them dark with the darkness of an English mob. It was an aquatic crowd—a people exclusively living on and by the river—assembled to see a rowing-match between two of their own class for a boat, probably given by the publicans of the neighborhood—who would reap ten times the advantage. But although there were thousands assembled, the uproar troubled such a small proportion of the river's surface, that one might have rowed up and down in the middle space between Rotherhithe and Wapping for hours and known nothing about it.

But Thomas did not see the race, not because he was in haste to get ashore, but because something happened. His waterman, anxious to see the sport, lingered in the crowd lining the whole of that side of the river. In a boat a little way farther up was a large family party, and in it a woman who was more taken up with the baby in her arms than with all that was going on around her. In consequence of her absorption in the merry child which was springing with all the newly-discovered delight of feet and legs, she was so dreadfully startled when the bows of another boat struck the gunwale just at her back, that she sprung half up from her seat, and the baby, jerking itself forward, dropped from her arms into the river. Thomas was gazing

listlessly at the water when he saw the child sweep past him a foot or so below the surface. His next remembered consciousness was in the water. He was a fair swimmer, though no rider. He caught the child, and let himself drift with the tide, till he came upon the cable of a vessel that lay a hundred yards below. Boats came rushing about him; in a moment the child was taken from him and handed across half a dozen of them to his mother; and in another moment he too was in a boat. When he came to himself a gin-faced, elderly woman, in a small threadbare tartan shawl, was wiping his face with a pocket-handkerchief, and murmuring some feminine words over him, while a coarse-looking, dough-faced man was holding a broken cup with some spirit in it to his mouth.

"Go ashore with the gentleman, Jim," said the woman. "There's the India Arms. That's a respectable place. You must go to bed, my dear, till you gets your clo'es dried."

"I haven't paid my man," said Tom, feebly. He was now shivering with cold; for after the night and day he had spent, he was in no condition to resist the effects of the water.

"Oh, we'll pay him. Here, Fluke," cried two or three: they seemed all to know each other.

"Come along, sir," cried twenty shrill voices over his head. He looked up and saw that they were alongside of a great barge which was crowded with little dirty creatures, row above row. "Come this way—solid barges, sir, all the way. Ketch hold of the gen'l'm'n's hand, Sammy. There. Now, Bill."

They hauled and lifted Thomas on to the barge, then led him along the side and across to the next yawning wooden gulf, and so over about seven barges to a plank, which led from the last on to a ladder ascending to the first floor of a public-house, the second floor of which, supported upon piles, projected over high water. There his conductors, two ragged little mudlarks, left him.

Through an empty kind of bar-room, he went into the bar, which communicated with the street. Here first he found that he had been followed by the same man who had given him the gin. He now passed before him to the counter, and said to the woman who was pumping a pot of beer—

"This gen'l'man, Mrs. Cook, 's been and just took a child out o' the water, ma'am. He 'ain't got a change in his wescent-pocket, so if you'll do what ye can for 'im, there's many on us 'll be obliged to ye, ma'am."

"Lor, whose child was it, Jim?"

"I don't know as you know her, ma'am. The man's name's Potts. He keeps a public down about Limehouse, soverever."

Thomas stood shivering—glad, however, that the man should represent his case for him.

"The gentleman had better go to bed till we get his clo'es dried for him," said the landlady. "I think that's the best we can do for him."

"Take a drop o' summat, sir," said the man, turning to Thomas. "They keeps good lieker here. Put a name upon it, sir."

"Well, I'll have a small glass of pale brandy," said Thomas—"neat, if you please. And what'll you have yourself? I'm much obliged to you

for introducing me here, for I must look rather a queer customer."

"It's what *you'll* have, not what I'll have, sir, if you'll excuse *me*," returned the man.

"I beg your pardon," said Thomas, who had just received his brandy. He drank it, and proceeded to put his hand in his pocket—no easy matter in the state of his garments.

"I'm a goin' to pay for this," interposed the man, in a determined tone, and Thomas was hardly in a condition to dispute it.

At the same moment the landlady, who had left the bar after she had helped Thomas, returned, saying, "Will you walk this way, sir?" Thomas followed, and found himself in a neat enough little room, where he was only too glad to undress and go to bed. As he pulled off his coat, it occurred to him to see that his money was safe. He had put it, mostly in sovereigns, into a pocket-book of elaborate construction, which he generally carried in the breast-pocket of what the tailors call a lounging-coat. It was gone. His first conclusion was, that the man had taken it. He rushed back into the bar, but he was not there. It must be confessed that, in the midst of his despair, a fresh pang at the loss of his money shot through Thomas's soul. But he soon came to the conclusion that the man had not taken it. It was far more likely that, as he went overboard, the book slipped from his pocket into the water, and in this loss an immediate reward of almost his first act of self-forgetfulness, had followed. The best thing that can happen to a man, sometimes, is to lose his money; and while people are compassionate over the loss, God may regard it as the first step of the stair by which the man shall rise above it and many things besides with which not only his feet, but his hands and his head, are defiled. Then first he began to feel that he had no ground under his feet—the one necessity before such a man could find a true foundation. Until he lost it, he did not know how much, even in his misery, the paltry hundred pounds had been to him. Now it was gone, things looked black indeed. He emptied his pockets of two or three sovereigns, and some silver, put his clothes out at the door, and got into bed. There he fell a thinking. Instead of telling what he thought, however, I will now turn to what my reader may be, and I have been, thinking about his act of rescue.

What made him, who has been shown all but incapable of originating a single action, thus at the one right moment do the one right thing? Here arises another question: Does a man *always* originate his own actions? Is it not possible, to say the least of it, that, just to give him a taste of what well-doing means, some moment, when selfishness is sick and faint, may be chosen by the power in whom we live and move and have our being to inspire the man with a true impulse? We must think what an unspeakable comfort it must have been to Thomas, in these moments of hopeless degradation of which he felt all the bitterness, suddenly to find around him, as the result of a noble deed into which he had been unaccountably driven, a sympathetic, yes, admiring public. No matter that they were not of his class, nor yet that Thomas was not the man to do the human brotherhood justice; he could not help feeling the present power of hu-

manity, the healing medicine of approbation, in the faces of the *common* people who had witnessed and applauded his deed. I say *medicine* of approbation; for what would have been to him in ordinary, a poison, was now a medicine. There was no fear of his thinking himself too much of a hero at present.

It may be objected that the deed originated only in a carelessness of life resulting from self-contempt. I answer that no doubt that had its share in making the deed possible, because it removed for the time all that was adverse to such a deed; but self-despite, however true and well-grounded, can not inspire to true and noble action. I think it was the divine, the real self, aroused at the moment by the breath of that wind which bloweth where it listeth, that sprung thus into life and deed, shadowing, I say *shadowing* only, that wonderful saying of our Lord that he that loseth his life shall find it. It had come—been given to him—that a touch of light might streak the dark cloud of his fate, that he might not despise himself utterly, and act as unredeemable—kill himself or plunge into wickedness to drown his conscience. It was absolutely necessary that he should be brought to *wake*; but here was just one little opening—not out of want, but into the light of a higher region altogether, the region of well-being—by which a glimmer of the strength of light could enter the chaos of his being. Any good deed partakes of the life whence it comes, and is a good to him who has done it. And this act might be a beginning.

Poor weak Thomas, when he got his head down on the pillow, began to cry. He pitied himself for the helplessness to which he was now reduced, and a new phase of despair filled his soul. He even said in his thoughts that his ill-gotten gain had, like all the devil's money, turned to rubbish in his hands. What he was to do he could not tell. He was tolerably safe, however, for the night, and, worn and weary, soon fell into a sleep which not even a dream disturbed.

When he woke all was dark, and he welcomed the darkness as a friend. It soothed and comforted him a little. If it were only always dark! If he could find some cave to creep into where he might revel in—feed upon the friendly gloom! If he could get among the snowy people of the north, blessed with half a year of gentle snullessness! Thomas had plenty of fancy. He leaned on his elbow and looked out. His clothes had been placed by him while he slept. He rose and put them on, opened the door of his room, saw light somewhere, approached it softly, and found himself in a small room, like a large oriel window. The day had changed from gold to silver; the wide expanse of the great river lay before him, and up, and down, and across, it gleamed in the thoughtful radiance of the moon. Never was a picture of lovelier peace. It was like the reflex of the great city in the mind of a saint—all its vice, its crime, its oppression, money-loving, and ambition, all its fearfulness, grief, revenge, and remorse, gently covered with the silver mantle of faith and hope. But Thomas could not feel this. Its very repose was a reproach to him. There was no repose for him henceforth forever. He was degraded to all eternity. And herewith the thought of

Lucy, which had been hovering about his mind all day, like a bird looking for an open window that it might enter, but which he had not dared to admit, darted into its own place, and he groaned aloud. For in her eyes, as well as in his own, he was utterly degraded. Not a thousand good actions, not the applause of a thousand crowds, could destroy the fact that he had done as he had done. The dingy, applauding multitude, with its many voices, its kind faces, its outstretched hands, had vanished, as if the moon had melted it away from off the water. Never to all eternity would that praising people, his little consoling populace, exist again, again be gathered from the four corners whither they had vanished, to take his part, to speak for him that he was not all lost in badness, that they at least considered him fit company for them and their children.

Thoughts like these went to and fro in his mind as he looked out upon the scene before him. Then it struck him that all was strangely still. Not only was there no motion on the river, but there was no sound—only an occasional outcry in the streets behind. The houses across in Wapping showed rare lights, and looked sepulchral in the killing stare of the moon, which, high above, had not only the whole heavens but the earth as well to herself, and seemed to be taking her own way with it in the consciousness of irresistible power. What that way was, who can tell? The troubled brain of the maniac and the troubled conscience of the malefactor know something about it; but neither can tell the way of the moon with the earth. Fear laid hold upon Thomas. He found himself all alone with that white thing in the sky; and he turned from the glorious window to go down to the bar. But all the house was dark, the household in bed, and he alone awake and wandering “in the dead waste and middle of the night.” A horror seized him when he found that he was alone. Why should he fear? The night covered him. But there was God. I do not mean for a moment that he had a conscious fear of the Being he had been taught to call God. Never had that representation produced in him yet any sense of reality, any the least consciousness of presence—any thing like the feeling of the child who placed two chairs behind the window-curtain, told God that that one was for him, and sat down to have a talk with him. It was fear of the unknown God, manifested in the face of a nature which was strange and unfriendly to the evil-doer. It is to God alone that a man can flee from such terror of the unknown in the fierceness of the sea, in the ghastly eye of the moon, in the abysses of the glaciers, in the misty slopes of the awful mountain-side; but to God Thomas dared not or could not flee. Full of the horror of wakefulness in the midst of sleeping London, he felt his way back into the room he had just left, threw himself on a bench, and closed his eyes to shut out every thing. His own room at Highbury, even that of his mother with Mr. Simon talking in it, rose before him like a haven of refuge. But between him and that haven lay an impassable gulf. No more returning thither. He must leave the country. And Lucy? He must vanish from her eyes, that she might forget him and marry some one else. Was not that the only justice left him to do her? But would

Lucy forget him? Why should she not? Women could forget honorable men whom they had loved, let them only be out of their sight long enough; and why should not Lucy forget a —? He dared not even think the word that belonged to him now. A fresh billow of shame rushed over him. In the person of Lucy he condemned himself afresh to utter and ineffaceable shame, confusion, and hissing. Involuntarily he opened his eyes. A ghostly whiteness, the sails of a vessel hanging loose from their yards, gleamed upon him. The whole of the pale region of the moon, the spectral masts, the dead houses on the opposite shore, the glitter of the river as from eyes that would close no more, gleamed in upon him, and a fresh terror of loneliness in the presence of the incomprehensible and the unsympathetic overcame him. He fell on his knees and sought to pray; and doubtless in the ear that is keen with mercy it sounded as prayer, though to him who prayed it seemed that no winged thought arose to the infinite from a “heart as dry as dust.” Mechanically, at length, all feeling gone, both of fear and of hope, he went back to his room and his bed.

When he woke in the morning his landlady's voice was in his ears.

“Well, how do we find ourselves to-day, sir? None the worse, I hope?”

He opened his eyes. She stood by his bedside, with her short arms set like the handles of an urn. It was a common face that rose from between them, red, and with eyes that stood out with fatness. Yet Thomas was glad to see them looking at him, for there was kindness in them.

“I am all right, thank you,” he said.

“Where will you have your breakfast?” she asked.

“Where you please,” answered Thomas.

“Will you come down to the bar-parlor, then?”

“I shall be down in a few minutes.”

“Jim Salter's inquirin' after ye.”

“Who?” said Thomas, starting.

“Only Jim Salter, the man that brought you in last night, sir. I told him to wait till I came up.”

“I shall be down in one minute,” said Thomas, a hope of his money darting into his mind.

He had to pass through the bar to the little room at the back. Against the counter leaned Jim, smoking a short pipe, with his hand upon a pot of beer. When Thomas entered, he touched his cap to him, saying—

“Glad to see you lookin' middlin', gunvor. Is there any thing I can do for you to-day?”

“Come into the room here,” said Thomas, “and have something. I'm rather late, you see. I haven't had my breakfast yet.”

Salter followed him with his pewter in his hand. Thomas disliked his appearance less than on the preceding evening. What was unpleasant in his face was chiefly owing to the small-pox. He was dirty and looked *beery*, but there seemed to be no harm in him. He sat down near the door which led to the ladder already mentioned, and put his pot on the window-sill. Thomas asked if he would have a cup of coffee, but he preferred his beer and his pipe.

“You wanted to see me,” said Thomas, opening a conversation.

“Oh! nothin' particlar, gunvor. I only want-

ed to see if I could do any thing for you," said Jim.

"I was in hopes you had heard of something I lost, but I suppose it's at the bottom of the river," said Thomas.

"Not your watch?" asked Salter, with some appearance of anxious interest.

"A great deal worse," answered Thomas; "a pocket-book."

"Much in it?" asked Jim, with a genuine look of sympathetic discomfiture.

"More than I like to think of. Look," said Thomas, turning out the contents of his pocket, "that is all I have in the world."

"More than ever I had," returned Salter; "keep me a month."

Thomas relapsed into thought. This man was the only resemblance of a friend he had left. He did not like to let him go loose in the wilds of London, without the possibility of finding him again. If this man vanished, the only link Thomas felt between him and the world of men would be broken. I do not say Thomas *thought* this. He only felt that he would be absolutely alone when this man left him. Why should he not go away somewhere with him?

"Where do you live?" he asked.

"Stepney way," answered Jim.

"I want to see that part of London. What do you do now? I mean what do you work at?"

"Oh! nothin' perticular, gvnor. Take a day at the docks now and then. Any job that turns up. I'm not perticular. Only I never could stick to one thing. I like to be moving. I had a month in Bermondsey last—in a tan-yard, you know. I knows a bit of every thing."

"Well, where are you going now?"

"Nowheres—anywhere you like, gvnor. If you want to see them parts, as you say, there's nobody knows 'em better than I do, Tiger-bay and all."

"Come then," said Thomas. But here a thought struck him. "Wouldn't it be better, though," he added—"they're queer places some of those, ain't they?—to put on a workman's clothes?"

Jim looked at him. Thomas felt himself wince under his gaze. But he was relieved when he said, with a laugh—

"You won't look much like a workman, gvnor, put on what you like."

"I can't wear these clothes anyhow," said Thomas; "they look so wretchedly shabby after their ducking. Couldn't you take me somewhere, where they'd change them for a suit of fustian? I should like to try how they feel for a few days. We're about the same size—I could give them to you when I had done with them."

Jim had been observing him, and had associated this wish of Thomas's with the pocket-book, and his furtive troubled looks. But Jim was as little particular about his company as about any thing else, and it was of no consequence to him whether Thomas had or had not deeper reasons than curiosity for seeking to disguise himself.

"I tell you what," he said; "if you want to keep quiet for a day or two, I'm your man. But if you put on a new suit of fustian, you'll be more looked at than in your own clo'es."

Thomas had by this time finished his breakfast: it was not much he could eat.

"Well," he said, rising, "if you've nothing particular to do, I'll give you a day's wages to go with me. Only let's go into Stepney, or away somewhere in that direction, as soon as possible."

He called the landlady, settled his very moderate bill, and then found that his hat must be somewhere about the Nore by this time. Jim ran to a neighboring shop, and returned with a cloth cap. They then went out into a long narrow street, Rotherhithe Street, I think, very different in aspect from any he had seen in London before. Indeed it is more like a street in Cologne. Here we must leave him with his misery and Jim Salter, both better companions than Molken.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

POPPIE CHOOSES A PROFESSION.

WHEN their native red began to bloom again upon the cheeks of Poppie, she began to grow restless, and the heart of the tailor to grow anxious. It was very hard for a wild thing to be kept in a cage against her will, he thought. He did not mind sitting in a cage, but then he was used to it, and frequented it of his own free will; whereas his child Poppie took after her grandfather—her mother's father, who was a sailor, and never set his foot on shore but he wanted to be off again within the week.

He therefore began to reason with himself as to what ought to be done with her. So soon as she was quite strong again all her wandering habits would return, and he must make some provision for them. It would not only be cruel to try to break her of them all at once, but assuredly fruitless. Poppie would give him the slip some day, return to her Arab life, and render all sealing of the bond between father and daughter impossible. The streets were her home. She was used to them. They made life pleasant to her. And yet it would not do to let her run idle about the streets. He thought and thought what would be best.

Meantime the influence of Mattie had grown upon Poppie. Although there was as yet very little sign of any thing like thought in her, the way she deferred to the superior intelligence in their common pursuits proved that she belonged to the body of humanity, and not to unassociated animality. Her love of bright colors now afforded the first hold by which to commence her education. Remembering her own childhood, Mattie sought to interest her pupil in dolls, proceeding to dress one, which she called Poppie, in a gorgeous scarlet cloth which the tailor procured for the purpose. And Poppie was interested. The color drew her to the process. By degrees, she took a part; first only in waiting on Mattie, then in sewing on a button or string, at which she was awkward enough, as Mattie took more than necessary pains to convince her, learning however, by slow degrees, to use her needle a little. But what was most interesting to find was, that a certain amount of self-consciousness began to dawn during and apparently from the doll-dressing. Her causative association with the outer being of the doll, led to her turning an eye upon her own outer being; and Poppie's redemption—I do not say regeneration—first showed itself in a desire to be dressed. Cou-

sciousness begins with regard to the body first. A baby's first lesson of consciousness lies in his blue shoes. But one may object, "You do not call it a sign of redemption in a baby that, when you ask where baby's shoes are, he holds up his little feet with a smile of triumph." I answer, "It must be remembered, that Poppie had long passed the age when such interest indicates natural development, and therefore she was out of the natural track of the human being, and a return to that track, indicating an awakening of the nature that was in her, may well be called a sign of redemption. And with a delicate instinct of his own, nourished to this particular manifestation by his trade, the tailor detected the interest shown in the doll by Poppie, as a most hopeful sign, and set himself in the midst of his work to get a dress ready for her, such as she would like. Accustomed, however, only to work in cloth, and upon male subjects, the result was, to say the least of it, remarkable—altogether admirable in Poppie's eyes, though somewhat strange in those of others. She appeared one day in a scarlet jacket, of fine cloth, trimmed with black, which fitted her like her skin, and, to complete the dress, in a black skirt, likewise of cloth, which, however picturesque and accordant with the style of Poppie's odd beauty, was at least somewhat peculiar and undesirable in a city like London, which persecutes men's tastes if it leaves their convictions free.

This dress Mr. Spelt had got ready in view of a contemplated walk with Poppie. He was going to take her to Highbate on a Sunday morning, with his Bible in his pocket. I have already said that he was an apparent anomaly, this Mr. Spelt, loving his New Testament, and having no fancy for going to church. How this should have come about I hardly understand. Not that I do not know several instances of it in most excellent men, but not in his stratum. Yet what was his stratum? The Spirit of God teaches men in a thousand ways, and Mr. Spelt knew some of the highest truths better than nine out of ten clergymen, I venture to say. Yet Mr. Spelt was inwardly reproached that he did not go to church, and made the attempt several times, with the result that he doubted the truth of the whole thing for half the week after. Some church-going reader must not condemn him at least for preferring Highbate to the church-yard gate.

It was a bright frosty morning, full of life and spirit, when the father and daughter—for thus we accept the willful conviction of the tailor, and say no more about it—set out for Highbate. Poppie was full of spirits, too full for her father's comfort, for, every time she drew her hand from his, and dashed away sideways or in front, he feared lest he had seen the last of her, and she would never more return to lay her hand in his. On one of these occasions, it was to dart a hundred yards in advance upon another little girl, who was listlessly standing at a crossing, take the broom from her hand, and begin to sweep vigorously. Nor did she cease sweeping till she had made the crossing clean, by which time her father had come up. She held out her hand to him, received in it a ready penny, and tossed it to the girl. Then she put her hand in his again, and trotted along with him, excited and sedate both at once.

"Would you like to sweep a crossing, Poppie?" asked he.

"Wouldn't I just, daddie? I should get no end o' ha'pence."

"What would you do with them when you got them?"

"Give them to poor girls. I don't want them, you see, now I'm a lady."

"What makes a lady of you then?"

"I've got a father of my own, all to myself—that makes a lady of me, I suppose. Anyhow I know I am a lady now. Look at my jacket."

I do not know that Mr. Spelt thought that her contempt of money, or rather want of faith in it, went a good way to make her a very peculiar lady indeed; but he did think that he would buy her a broom the first day he saw the attraction of the streets grow too strong for Guild Court.

This day, things did not go quite to the tailor's mind. He took Poppie to a little public-house which he had known for many years, for it was kept by a cousin of his. There he ordered his half-pint of beer, carried it with him to a little arbor in the garden, now getting very bare of its sheltering leaves, sat down with Poppie, pulled out his Bible, and began to read to her. But he could not get her to mind him. Every other moment she was up and out of the arbor, now after one thing, now after another; now it was a spider busily rolling up a fly in his gluey web; now it was a chicken escaped from the hen-house, and scratching about as if it preferred finding its own living even in an irregular fashion; and now a bird of the air that sowed not nor reaped, and yet was taken care of.

"Come along, Poppie," said her father; "I want you to listen."

"Yes, daddie," Poppie would answer, returning instantly; but in a moment, ere a sentence was finished, she would be half across the garden. He gave it up in despair.

"Why ain't you reading, daddie?" she said, after one of these excursions.

"Because you won't listen to a word of it, Poppie."

"Oh! yes; here I am," she said.

"Come, then; I will teach you to read."

"Yes," said Poppie, and was off after another sparrow.

"Do you know that God sees you, Poppie?" asked Mr. Spelt.

"I don't mind," answered Poppie.

He sighed and closed his book, drank the last of his half-pint of beer, and rose to go. Poppie seemed to feel that she had displeased him, for she followed without a word. They went across the fields to Hampstead, and then across more fields to the Finchley Road. In passing the old church, the deeper notes of the organ reached their ears.

"There," said Poppie; "I suppose that's God making his thunder. Ain't it, daddie?"

"No. It's not that," answered Spelt.

"It's there he keeps it, anyhow," said Poppie. "I've heard it coming out many a time."

"Was you never in one o' them churches?" asked her father.

"No," answered Poppie.

"Would you like to go?" he asked again, with the hope that something might take hold of her.

"If you went with me," she said.

Now Mr. Spelt had heard of Mr. Fuller from Mr. Kately, and had been once to hear him preach. He resolved to take Poppie to his church that evening.

My reader will see that the child had already made some progress. She talked at least. How this began I can not explain. No fresh sign of thought or of conscience in a child comes into my notice but I feel it like a miracle—a something that can not be accounted for save in attributing it to a great Thought that can account for it.

They got upon an omnibus, to Poppie's great delight, and rode back into the city. After they had had some tea they went to the evening service, where they saw Lucy, and Mattie with her father. Mattie was very devout, and listened even when she could not understand; Poppie only stared, and showed by her restlessness that she wanted to be out again. When they were again in the street she asked just one question: "Why did Jesus Christ put on that ugly black thing?"

"That wasn't Jesus Christ," said Mattie, with a little pharisaical horror.

"Oh! wasn't it?" said Poppie, in a tone of disappointment. "I thought it was."

"Oh, Poppie, Poppie!" said poor Mr. Spelt; "haven't I told you twenty times that Jesus Christ was the Son of God?"

But he might have told her a thousand times. Poppie could not recall what she had no apprehension of when she heard it. What was Mr. Spelt to do? He had tried and tried, but he had got no idea into her yet. But Poppie had no objection either to religion in general, or to any dogma whatever in particular. It was simply that she stood in no relation of consciousness toward it or any part or phase of it. Even Mattie's attempts resulted in the most grotesque conceptions and fancies. But that she was willing to be taught, an instance which soon followed will show.

Her restlessness increasing, and her father dreading lest she should be carried away by some sudden impulse of lawlessness, he bought her a broom one day—the best he could find of course—and told her she might, if she pleased, go and sweep a crossing. Poppie caught at the broom, and vanished without a word. Not till she was gone beyond recall did her father bethink himself that the style of her dress was scarcely accordant with the profession she was about to assume. She was more like a child belonging to a traveling theatre than any other. He remembered, too, that crossing-sweepers are exceedingly tenacious of their rights, and she might get into trouble. He could not keep quiet; his work made no progress; and at last he yielded to his anxiety and went out to look for her. But he wandered without success, lost half his day, and returned disconsolate.

At their dinner-hour Poppie came home; but, alas! with her brilliant jacket nearly as dirty as her broom, the appearance of which certainly indicated work. Spelt stooped as usual, but hesitated to lift her to his nest.

"Oh, Poppie," he expostulated, "what a mess you've made of yourself!"

"'Tain't me, daddie," she answered. "It's them nasty boys—would throw dirt at me.

'Twasn't their crossing I took—they hadn't no call to chivy me. But I give it them."

"What did you do, Poppie?" asked her father, a little anxiously.

"I looks up at St. Paul's, and I says, 'Please, Jesus Christ, help me to give it 'em.' And then I flies at 'em with my broom, and I knocks one o' them down, and a cart went over his leg, and he's took to the 'ospitalle. I believe his leg's broke."

"Oh, Poppie! And didn't they say any thing to you? I wonder they didn't take you up."

"They couldn't find me. I thought Jesus Christ would help me. He did."

What was Mr. Spelt to say? He did not know; and, therefore, unlike some, who would teach others even when they have nothing to impart, he held his peace. But he took good care not to let her go out in that dress any more.

"Didn't you get any ha'pence?" he asked.

"Yes. I give 'em all to the boy. I wouldn't if the cart hadn't gone over him, though. Catch me!"

"Why did you give them to him?"

"Oh, I don't know. I wanted to."

"Did he take them?"

"Course he did. Why shouldn't he? I'd ha' took 'em."

Mr. Spelt resolved at last to consult Mr. Fuller about the child. He went to see him, and told him all he knew concerning her. To his surprise, however, when he came to her on-set with the broom, Mr. Fuller burst into a fit of the heartiest laughter. Spelt stood with his mouth open, staring at the sacred man. Mr. Fuller saw his amazement.

"You don't think it was very wicked of your poor child to pray to God and shoulder her broom, do you?" he said, still laughing.

"We're told to forgive our enemies, sir. And Poppie prayed against hers."

"Yes, yes, You and I have heard that, and, I hope, learned it. But Poppie, if she has heard it, certainly does not understand it yet. Do you ever read the Psalms?"

"Yes, sometimes. Some of them pretty often, sir."

"You will remember, then, how David prays against his enemies?"

"Yes, sir. It's rather awful, sometimes."

"What do you make of it? Was it wicked in David to do so?"

"I daren't say that, sir."

"Then why should you think it was in Poppie?"

"I think perhaps David didn't know better."

"And you think Poppie ought to know better than David?"

"Why, you see, sir, if I'm right, as I fancy, David lived before our Saviour came into the world to teach us better."

"And so you think Poppie more responsible than a man like David, who loved God as not one Christian in a million, notwithstanding that the Saviour is come, has learned to love him yet? A man may love God, and pray against his enemies. Mind you, I'm not sure that David hated them. I know he did not love them, but I am not sure that he hated them. And I am sure Poppie did not hate hers,

for she gave the little rascal her coppers, you know."

"Thank you, sir," said Spelt, grateful to the heart's core that Mr. Fuller stood up for Poppie.

"Do you think God heard David's prayers against his enemies?" resumed Mr. Fuller.

"He gave him victory over them, anyhow."

"And God gave Poppie the victory, too. I think God heard Poppie's prayer. And Poppie will be the better for it. She'll pray for a different sort of thing before she has done praying. It is a good thing to pray to God for any thing. It is a grand thing to begin to pray."

"I wish you would try and teach her something, sir. I have tried and tried, and I don't know what to do more. I don't seem to get any thing into her."

"You're quite wrong, Mr. Spelt. You have taught her. She prayed to God before she fell upon her enemies with her broom."

"But I do want her to believe. I confess to you, sir, I've never been much of a church-goer, but I do believe in Christ."

"It doesn't much matter whether you go to church or not if you believe in him. Tell me how you came to hear or know about him without going to church."

"My wife was a splendid woman, sir—Poppie's mother, but—you see, sir—she wasn't—she didn't—she was a bit of a disappointment to me."

"Yes. And what then?"

"I took to reading the Bible, sir."

"Why did you do that?"

"I don't know, sir. But somehow, bein' unhappy, and knowin' no way out of it, I took to the Bible, sir. I don't know why or wherefore, but that's the fact. And when I began to read, I began to think about it. And from then I began to think about every thing that came in my way—a tryin' to get things all square in my own head, you know, sir."

Mr. Fuller was delighted with the man, and having promised to think what he could do for Poppie, they parted. And here I may mention that Spelt rarely missed a Sunday morning at Mr. Fuller's church after this. For he had found a fellow-man who could teach him, and that the Bible was not the sole means used by God to make his children grow: their brothers and sisters must have a share in it too.

Mr. Fuller set about making Poppie's acquaintance. And first he applied to Mattie, in order to find out what kind of thing Poppie liked. Mattie told him *lollipops*. But Mr. Fuller preferred attacking the town of Mansoul at the gate of one of the nobler senses, if possible. He tried Lucy, who told him about the bit of red glass and the buttons. So Mr. Fuller presented his friendship's offering to Poppie in the shape of the finest kaleidoscope he could purchase. It was some time before she could be taught to shut one eye and look with the other; but when at length she succeeded in getting a true vision of the wonders in the inside of the thing, she danced and shouted for joy. This confirmed Mr. Fuller's opinion that it was through her eyes, and not through her ears, that he must approach Poppie's heart. She had never been accustomed to receive secondary impressions: all her impressions, hitherto, had come immediately through the senses. Mr. Fuller therefore concluded that he could reach

her mind more readily through the seeing of her eyes than such hearing of the ears as had to be converted by the imagination into visual forms before it could make any impression. He must get her to ask questions by showing her eyes what might suggest them. And Protestantism having deprived the Church of almost all means of thus appealing to the eye as an inlet of truth, he was compelled to supply the deficiency as he best could. I do not say that Mr. Fuller would have filled his church with gorgeous paintings as things in general, and artists in especial, are. He shrank in particular from the more modern representations, of our Lord given upon canvas, simply because he felt them to be so unlike him, showing him either as effeminately soft, or as pompously condescending; but if he could have filled his church with pictures in which the strength exalted the tenderness, and the majesty was glorified by the homeliness, he would have said that he did not see why painted windows should be more consistent with Protestantism than painted walls. Lacking such aids, he must yet provide as he could that kind of instruction which the early Church judged needful for those of its members who were in a somewhat similar condition to that of Poppie. He therefore began teaching the print-shops, till he got together about a dozen of such engravings, mostly from the old masters, as he thought would represent our Lord in a lovable aspect, and make the child want to have them explained. For Poppie had had no big family Bible with pictures, to pore over in her homeless childhood; and now she had to go back to such a beginning.

By this time he had so far ingratiated himself with her that she was pleased to accompany Mattie to tea with him, and then the pictures made their appearance. This took place again and again, till the pictures came to be looked for as part of the entertainment—Mr. Fuller adding one now and then, as he was fortunate in his search, for he never passed a fresh print-shop without making inquiry after such engravings.

Meantime Poppie went out crossing-sweeping by fits and starts. Her father neither encouraged nor prevented her.

One afternoon of a cold day, when the wind from the east was blowing the darkness over the city, and driving all who had homes and could go to them home for comfort, they were walking hand in hand in Farringdon Street, a very bleak, open place. Poppie did not feel the cold nearly so much as her father, but she did blow upon the fingers of her disengaged hand now and then notwithstanding.

"Have a potato to warm you, Poppie," said her father, as they came up to one of those little steam-engines for cooking potatoes, which stand here and there on the edges of the pavements about London, blowing a fierce cloud of steam from their little funnels, so consoling to the half-frozen imagination.

"Jolly!" cried Poppie, running up to the man, and laying her hand on the greasy sleeve of his velvet coat.

"I say, Jim, give us a ha'porth," she said.

"Why, 'tain't never you, Poppie?" returned the man.

"Why ain't it?" said Poppie. "Here's my father. I've found one, and a good 'un, Jim."

The man looked at Poppie's dress, then at Mr

Spelt, touched the front of his cloth cap, and said—

“Good evenin’, gunvor.” Then in an undertone he added, “I say, gunvor, you never did better in your life than takin’ that ’ere pretty creature off the streets. You look well arter her. She’s a right good un, I know. Bless you, she ain’t no knowledge what wickedness means.”

In the warmth of his heart, Mr. Spelt seized the man’s hand, and gave it a squeeze of gratitude.

“Come, Jim, ain’t your taters done yet?” said Poppie.

“Bustin’ o’ mealiness,” answered Jim, throwing back the lid, and taking out a potato, which he laid in the hollow of his left hand. Then he caught up an old and I fear dirty knife, and split the potato lengthways. Then with the same knife, he took a piece of butter from somewhere about the apparatus, though how it was not oil instead of butter I can not think, laid it into the cleft as if it had been a trowelful of mortar, gave it a top-dressing of salt and a shake of the pepper-box, and handed it to Poppie.

“Same for you, sir?” he asked.

“Well, I don’t mind if I do have one,” answered Spelt. “Are they good?”

“The best *and* the biggest at the price in all London,” said Jim. “Taste one,” he went on, as he prepared another, “and if you like to part with it then, I’ll take it back and eat it myself.”

Spelt paid for the potatoes—the sum of three ha’pence—and Poppie bidding Jim good-night, trotted away by his side, requiring both her hands now for the management of her potato, at which she was more expert than her father, for he, being nice in his ways, found the butter and the peel together troublesome.

“I say, ain’t it jolly!” remarked Poppie. “I call that a good trade now.”

“Would you like to have one o’ them things and sell hot potatoes?” asked her father.

“Just wouldn’t I?”

“As well as sweeping a crossing?”

“A deal better,” answered Poppie. “You see, daddie, it’s more respectable—a deal. It takes money to buy a thing like that. And I could wear my red jacket then. Nobody could say any thing then, for the thing would be my own, and a crossing belongs to every body.”

Mr. Spelt turned the matter over and over in his mind, and thought it might be a good plan for giving Poppie some liberty, and yet keeping her from roving about everywhere without object or end. So he began at once to work for a potato-steamer for Poppie, and, in the course of a fortnight, managed to buy her one. Great was Poppie’s delight.

She went out regularly in the dusk to the corner of Bagot Street. Her father carried the machine for her, and leaving her there with it, returned to his work. In following her new occupation, the child met with little annoyance, for this was a respectable part of the city, and the police knew her, and were inclined to protect her. One of her chief customers was Mr. Spelt himself, who would always once, sometimes twice, of an evening, lay down his work, scramble from his perch, and running to the corner of the street, order a potato, ask her how she was getting on, pay his ha’penny or penny, and hurry back with the hot handful to console him for the absence

of his darling. Having eaten it, chuckling and rejoicing, he would attack his work with vigor so renewed as soon to make up for the loss of time involved in procuring it. But keeping out of view the paternal consumption, Poppie was in a fair way of soon paying all the expense of the cooking apparatus. Mr. and Miss Kitley were good customers, too, and every thing looked well for father and daughter.

Every night, at half-past nine, her father was by her side to carry the “murphy-buster”—that was Jim’s name for it—home. There was no room for it in the shop, of course. He took it up the three flights of stairs to Poppie’s own room; and there, with three-quarters of a pint of beer to wash them down, they finished the remainder potatoes, “with butter, with pepper, and with salt,” as Poppie would exclaim, in the undisguised delight of her sumptuous fare. Sometimes there were none left, but that gave only a variety to their pleasures; for as soon as the engine, as Mr. Spelt called it, was deposited in safety, they set out to buy their supper. And great were the consultations to which, in Mr. Spelt’s desire to draw out the choice and judgment of his daughter, this proceeding gave rise. At one time it was a slice of beef or ham that was resolved upon, at another a bit of pudding, sometimes a couple of mutton-pics or sausages, with bread *ad libitum*. There was a cookshop in the neighborhood, whose window was all beclouded with jets of steam, issuing as from a volcanic soil, and where all kinds of hot dainties were ready for the fortunate purchaser: thither the two would generally repair, and hold their consultation outside the window. Then, the desirable thing once agreed upon, came the delight of buying it, always left to Poppie; of carrying it home, still left to Poppie; of eating it, not left to Poppie, but heightened by the sympathetic participation of her father. Followed upon all, the chapter in the Bible, the Lord’s Prayer, bed, and dreams of Mrs. Flanagan and her gin bottle, or, perhaps, of Lucey and her first kiss.

CHAPTER XL.

THOMAS’S MOTHER.

MEANTIME Mrs. Worboise had taken to her bed, and not even Mr. Simon could comfort her. The mother’s heart now spoke louder than her theology.

She and her priest belonged to a class more numerous than many of my readers would easily believe, a great part of whose religion consists in arrogating to themselves exclusive privileges, and another great part in defending their supposed rights from the intrusion of others. The thing does not look such to them, of course, but the repulsiveness of their behavior to those who can not use the same religious phrases, indicating the non-adoption of their particular creed, compels others so to conclude concerning their religion. Doubtless they would say for themselves, “We do but as God has taught us; we believe but as he has told us; we exclude whom he has excluded, and admit whom he has admitted.” But alas for that people, the god of whose worship is altogether such a one as themselves, or worse; whose god is paltry, shallow-minded, and full of party

spirit; who sticks to a thing *because* he has said it, accepts a man because of his assent, and condemns him because of his opinions; who looks no deeper than a man's words to find his thoughts, and no deeper than his thoughts to find his will! True, they are in the hands of another God than that of their making, and such offenses must come; yet, alas for them! for they are of the hardest to redeem into the childhood of the kingdom.

I do not say that Mrs. Worboise began to see her sin as such, when the desolation of Thomas's disappearance fell upon her, but the atmosphere of her mind began to change, and a spring-season of mother's feelings to set in. How it came about I can not explain. I as well as any of my readers might have felt as if Mrs. Worboise were almost beyond redemption; but it was not so. Her redemption came in the revival of a long suppressed motherhood. Her husband's hardness and want of sympathy with her sufferings had driven her into the arms of a party of exclusive *Christians*, whose brotherhood consisted chiefly, as I have already described it, in denying the great brotherhood, and refusing the hand of those who followed not with them. They were led by one or two persons of some social position, whose condescending assumption of superiority over those that were without was as offensive as absurd, and whose weak brains were their only excuse. The worst thing of this company was that it was a company. In many holding precisely the same opinions with them, those opinions are comparatively harmless, because they are more directly counteracted by the sacred influences of God's world and the necessities of things, which are very needful to prevent, if possible, self-righteous Christians from sending themselves to a deeper hell than any they denounce against their neighbors. But when such combine themselves into an esoteric school, they foster, as in an oven or a forcing-pit, all the worst distinctions for the sake of which they separate themselves from others. All that was worst in poor Mrs. Worboise was cherished by the companionship of those whose chief anxiety was to save their souls, and who thus ran the great risk set forth by the Saviour of losing them. They treated the words of the Bible like talismans or spells, the virtue of which lay in the words and the assent given to them, or at most, the feelings that could be conjured up by them, not in the doing of the things they presupposed or commanded. But there was one thing that did something to keep her fresh and prevent her from withering into a dry tree of supposed orthodoxy, the worst dryness of all, because it is the least likely to yield to any fresh burst of living sap from the forgotten root—that was her anxiety to get her son within the "garden walled around," and the continual disappointment of her efforts to that end.

But now that the shock of his flight had aggravated all the symptoms of her complaint, which was a serious one though slow in the movement of its progressive cycles, now that she was confined to her bed and deprived of the small affairs that constituted the dull excitements of her joyless life, her imagination, roused by a reaction from the first grief, continually presented to her the form of her darling in the guise of the prodigal, his handsome face worn

with hunger and wretchedness, or still worse, with dissipation and disease; and she began to accuse herself bitterly for having alienated his affections from herself by too assiduously forcing upon his attention that which was distasteful to him. She said to herself that it was easy for an old woman like her, who had been disappointed in every thing, and whose life and health were a wreck, to turn from the vanities of the world, but how could her young Thomas, in the glory of youth, be expected to see things as she saw them? How could he flee from the wrath to come when he had as yet felt no breath of that wrath on his cheek? She ought to have loved him, and borne with him, and smiled upon him, and never let him fancy that his presence was a pain to her because he could not take her ways for his. Add to this certain suspicions that arose in her mind from what she considered unfriendly neglect on the part of the chief man of their chosen brotherhood, and from the fact that her daughter Amy had already wrought a questionable change on Mr. Simon, having persuaded him to accompany her—not to the theatre at all—only to the Gallery of Illustration, and it will be seen that every thing tended to turn the waters of her heart back into the old channel with the flow of a spring-tide toward her son. She wept and prayed—better tears and better prayers because her love was stronger. She humbled her heart, proud of its acceptance with God, before a higher idea of that God. She began to doubt whether she was more acceptable in his sight than other people. There must be some who were, but she could not be one of them. Instead of striving after assurance, as they called it, she began to shrink from every feeling that lessened her humility; for she found that when she was most humble then she could best pray for her son. Not that had her assurance rested in the love of God it would ever have quenched her prayer; but her assurance had been taught to rest upon her consciousness of faith, which, unrealized, tended to madness—realized, to spiritual pride. She lay thus praying for him, and dreaming about him, and hoping that he would return before she died, when she would receive him as son had never before been welcomed to his mother's bosom.

But Mr. Worboise's dry sand-locked bay was open to the irruption of no such waters from the great deep of the eternal love. Narrow and poor as it was, Mrs. Worboise's religion had yet been as a little wedge to keep her door open to better things, when they should arrive and claim an entrance, as they had now done. But her husband's heart was full of money and the love of it. How to get money, how *not* to spend it, how to make it grow—these were the chief cares that filled his heart. His was not the natural anxiety the objects of which, though not the anxiety, were justified by the Lord when he said, "Your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." It was not what he needed that filled his mind with care, but what he did not need, and never would need; nay, what other people needed, and what was not his to take—not his in God's sight, whatever the law might say. And to God's decision every thing must come at last, for that is the only human verdict of things, the only verdict which at last will satisfy the whole jury of humanity. But I am wrong; this was not all that filled his heart.

One demon generally opens the door to another—they are not jealous of exclusive possession of the human thrall. The heart occupied by the love of money will be only too ready to fall a prey to other evils; for selfishness soon branches out in hatred and injustice. The continued absence of his son, which he attributed still to the Boxalls, irritated more than alarmed him; but if sometimes a natural feeling of dismay broke in upon him, it only roused yet more the worst feelings of his heart against Lucy and her grandmother. Every day to which Thomas's absence extended itself, his indignation sank deeper rather than rose higher. Every day he vowed that, if favored by fortune, he would make them feel in bitterness how deeply they had injured him. To the same account he entered all the annoyance given him by the well-meaning Mr. Sargent, who had only as yet succeeded in irritating him without gaining the least advantage over him. His every effort in resistance of probate failed. The decision of the court was that Mr. Boxall, a strong, healthy, well-seasoned, middle-aged man, was far more likely to have outlived all his daughters, than any one of them have outlived him; therefore Mr. Worboise obtained probate and entered into possession.

Although Mr. Sargent could not but have at least more than doubted the result, he felt greatly discomfited at it. He went straight to Mr. Morgenstern's office to communicate his failure and the foiling of the liberality which had made the attempt possible. Mr. Morgenstern only smiled and wrote him a check for the costs. Of course, being a Jew, he did not enjoy parting with his money for nothing—no Christian would have minded it in the least. Seriously, Mr. Morgenstern did throw half his cigar into the fire from annoyance. But his first words were—

“What's to be done for those good people then, Sargent!”

“We must wait till we see. I think I told you the that old lady has a claim upon the estate, which, most unfortunately, she can not establish. Now, however that this cormorant has had his own way, he will perhaps be inclined to be *generous*; for justice must be allowed in this case to put on the garb of generosity, else she will not appear in public, I can tell you. I mean to make this one attempt more. I confess to considerable misgiving, however. To-morrow, before his satisfaction has evaporated, I will make it, and let you know the result.”

By this time Mr. Morgenstern had lighted another cigar.

CHAPTER XLI.

LUCY'S NEW TROUBLE.

MR. SARGENT'S next application to Mr. Worboise, made on the morning after the decision of the court in his favor, shared the fate of all his preceding attempts. Mr. Worboise smiled it off. There was more inexorableness expressed in his smile than in another's sullen imprecation. The very next morning Mrs. Boxall was served with notice to quit at the approaching quarter-day; for she had no agreement, and paid no rent, consequently she was tenant only on sufferance. And now Mr. Stopper's behavior toward them underwent a considerable change; not that he

was in the smallest degree rude to them; but of course, there was now no room for that assumption of the confidential by which he had sought to establish the most friendly relations between himself and the probable proprietors of the business in which he hoped to secure his position, not merely as head-clerk, but as partner. The door between the house and the office was once more carefully locked, and the key put in his drawer, and having found how hostile his new master was to the inhabitants of the house, he took care to avoid every suspicion of intimacy with them.

Mrs. Boxall's paroxysm of indignant rage when she received the notice to quit was of course as impotent as the bursting of a shell in a mountain of mud. From the first, however, her anger had had this effect, that every body in the court, down to lowly and lonely Mr. Dolman, the cobbler, knew all the phases of her oppression and injury. Lucy never said a word about it, save to Mr. and Mrs. Morgenstern, whose offer of shelter for herself and her grandmother till they could see what was to be done, she gratefully declined, knowing that her grandmother would die rather than accept such a position.

“There's nothing left for me in my old age but the work-house,” said Mrs. Boxall, exhausted by one of her outbursts of fierce vindictive passion against the author of her misfortunes, which, as usual, ended in the few bitter tears that are left to the aged to shed.

“Grannie, grannie,” said Lucy, “don't talk like that. You have been a mother to me. See if I can not be a daughter to you. I am quite able to keep you and myself too as comfortable as ever. See if I can't.”

“Nonsense, child. It will be all that you can do to keep yourself; and I'm not a-going to sit on the neck of a young thing like you, just like a nightmare, and have you wishing me gone from morning to night.”

“I don't deserve that you should say that of me, grannie. But I'm sure you don't think as you say. And as to being able, with Mrs. Morgenstern's recommendation I can get as much teaching as I can undertake. I am pretty sure of that; and you know it will only be paying you back a very little of your own, grannie.”

Before Mrs. Boxall could reply, for she felt reproached for having spoken so to her granddaughter, there was a tap at the door, and Mr. Kitley entered.

“Begging your pardon, ladies, and taking the liberty of a neighbor, I made bold not to trouble you by ringing the bell. I've got something to speak about in the way of business.”

So saying, the worthy bookseller, who had no way of doing any thing but going at it like a bull, drew a chair near the fire.

“With your leave, ma'am, it's as easy to speak sitting as standing. So, if you don't object, I'll sit down.”

“Do sit down, Mr. Kitley,” said Lucy. “We're glad to see you—though you know we're in a little trouble just at present.”

“I know all about that, and I don't believe there's a creature in the court, down to Mrs. Cook's cat, that isn't ready to fly at that devil's limb of a lawyer. But you see, ma'am, if we was to murder him it wouldn't be no better for you. And what I come to say to you is this: I've got a deal more room on my premises than

I want, and it would be a wonderful accommodation to me, not to speak of the honor of it, if you would take charge of my little woman for me. I can't interfere with her, you know, so as to say she's not to take care of me, you know, for that would go nigh to break her little heart; but if you would come and live there as long as convenient to you, you could get things for yourselves all the same as you does here, only you wouldn't have nothing to be out of pocket for house-room, you know. It would be the making of my poor motherless Mattie."

"Oh! we're not going to be so very poor as grannie thinks, Mr. Kitley," said Lucy, trying to laugh, while the old lady sat rocking herself to and fro and wiping her eyes. "But I should like to move into your house, for there's nowhere I should be so much at home."

"Lucy!" said her grandmother warningly.

"Stop a bit, grannie. Mr. Kitley's a real friend in need; and if I had not such a regard for him as I have, I would take it as it's meant. I'll tell you what, Mr. Kitley; it only comes to this, that I have got to work a little harder, and not lead such an idle life with my grannie here."

"You idle, miss!" interrupted the bookseller. "I never see any one more like the busy bee than yourself, only that you was always a-wastin' of your honey on other people; and that they say ain't the way of the bees."

"But you won't hear me out, Mr. Kitley. It would be a shame of me to go and live in any body's house for nothing, seeing I am quite able to pay for it. Now if you have room in your house—"

"Miles of it," cried the bookseller.

"I don't know where it can be then; for it's as full of books from the ground to the garret as—as my darling old grannie here is of independence."

"Don't you purtend to know more about my house, miss, than I does myself. Just you say the word, and before quarter-day you'll find two rooms fit for your use and at your service. What I owe to you, miss, in regard of my little one, nothing I can do can ever repay. They're a bad lot them Worboises—son and father! and that I saw—leastways in the young one."

This went with a sting to poor Lucy's heart. She kept hoping and hoping, and praying to God; but her little patch of blue sky was so easily overclouded! But she kept to the matter before her.

"Very well, Mr. Kitley; you ought to know best. Now for my side of the bargain. I told you already that I would rather be in your house than anywhere else, if I must leave this dear old place. And if you will let me pay a reasonable sum, as lodgings go in this court, we'll regard the matter as settled. And then I can teach Mattie a little, you know."

Mrs. Boxall did not put in a word. The poor old lady was beginning to weary of every thing, and for the first time in her life began to allow her affairs to be meddled with—as she would no doubt even now consider it. And the sound of paying for it was very satisfactory. I suspect part of Lucy's desire to move no farther than the entrance of the court, came from the hope that Thomas would some day or other turn up in that neighborhood, and perhaps this em-

boldened her to make the experiment of taking the matter so much into her own hands. Mr. Kitley scratched his head, and looked a little annoyed.

"Well, miss," he said, pausing between every few words, a most unusual thing with him, "that's not a bit of what I meant when I came up the court here. But that's better than nothing—for Mattie and me, I mean. So if you'll be reasonable about the rent, we'll easily manage all the rest. Mind you, miss, it'll be all clear profit to me."

"It'll cost you a good deal to get the rooms put in order as you say, you know, Mr. Kitley."

"Not much, miss. I know how to set about things better than most people. Bless you, I can buy wall-papers for half what you'd pay for them now. I know the trade. I've been a-most every thing in my day. Why, miss, I lived at one time such a close shave with dying of hunger, that after I was married, I used to make picture frames and then pawn my tools to get glass to put into them, and then carry them about to sell, and when I had sold 'em I bought more gold-beading and redeemed my tools, and did it all over again. Bless you! I know what it is to be hard up, if any body ever did. I once walked from Bristol to Newcastle upon fourpence. It won't cost me much to make them rooms decent. And then there's the back parlor at your service. I shan't plague you much, only to take a look at my princess now and then."

After another interview or two between Lucy and Mr. Kitley, the matter was arranged, and the bookseller proceeded to get his rooms ready, which involved chiefly a little closer packing, and the getting rid of a good deal of almost unsalable rubbish, which had accumulated from the purchase of lots.

Meantime another trial was gathering for poor Lucy. Mr. Sargent had met Mr. Wither, and had learned from him all he knew about Thomas. Mr. Wither was certain that every thing was broken off between Lucy and him. It was not only known to all at the office that Thomas had disappeared, but it was perfectly known as well that for some time he had been getting into bad ways, and his disappearance was necessarily connected with this fact, though no one but Mr. Stopper knew the precise occasion of his evanishment, and this he was, if possible, more careful than ever to conceal. Not even to the lad's father did he communicate what he knew: he kept this as a power over his new principal. From what he heard, Mr. Sargent resolved to see if he could get any thing out of Molken, and called upon him for that purpose. But the German soon convinced him that, although he had been intimate with Thomas, he knew nothing about him now. The last information he could give him was that he had staked and lost his watch and a lady's ring that he wore; that he had gone away and returned with money; and having gained considerably had disappeared and never been heard of again. It was easy for Mr. Sargent to persuade himself that a noble-minded creature like Lucy, having come to know the worthlessness of her lover, had dismissed him forever; and to believe that she would very soon become indifferent to a person so altogether unworthy of her affection. Prob-

ably he was urged yet the more to a fresh essay from the desire of convincing her that his motives in the first case had not been so selfish as accident had made them appear; for that his feelings toward her remained unaltered notwithstanding the change in her prospects. He therefore kept up his visits, and paid them even more frequently now than that there was no possible excuse on the score of business. For some time, however, so absorbed were Lucy's thoughts that his attentions gave her no uneasiness. She considered the matter so entirely settled, that no suspicion of the revival of any farther hope in the mind of Mr. Sargent arose to add a fresh trouble to the distress which she was doing all she could to bear patiently. But one day she was suddenly undeceived. Mrs. Boxall had just left the room.

"Miss Burton," said Mr. Sargent, "I venture to think circumstances may be sufficiently altered to justify me in once more expressing a hope that I may be permitted to regard a nearer friendship as possible between us."

Lucy started as if she had been hurt. The occurrence was so strange and foreign to all that was in her thoughts, that she had to look all around her as it were, like a person suddenly awaking in a strange place. Before she could speak, her grandmother re-entered. Mr. Sargent went away without any conviction that Lucy's behavior indicated repugnance to his proposal.

Often it happens that things work together without any concerted scheme. Mrs. Morgenstern had easily divined Mr. Sargent's feelings, and the very next day began to talk about him to Lucy. But she listened without interest, until Mrs. Morgenstern touched a chord which awoke a very painful one. For at last her friend had got rather piqued at Lucy's coldness and indifference.

"I think at least, Lucy, you might take a little interest in the poor fellow, if only from gratitude. A girl may acknowledge that feeling without compromising herself. There has Mr. Sargent been wearing himself out for you, lying awake at night, and running about all day, without hope of reward, and you are so taken up with your own troubles that you haven't a thought for the man who has done all that lay in human being's power to turn them aside."

Could Lucy help comparing this conduct with that of Thomas? And while she compared it, she could as little help the sudden inroad of the suspicion that Thomas had forsaken her that he might keep well with his father—the man who was driving them, as far as lay in his power, into the abysses of poverty; and that this disappearance was the only plan he dared to adopt for freeing himself—for doubtless his cowardice would be at least as great in doing her wrong as it had been in refusing to do her right. And she did feel that there was some justice in Mrs. Morgenstern's reproach. For if poor Mr. Sargent was really in love with her, she ought to pity him and feel for him some peculiar tenderness, for the very reason that she could not grant him what he desired. Her strength having been much undermined of late, she could not hear Mrs. Morgenstern's reproaches without bursting into tears. And then her friend began to comfort her; but all the time supposing that her troubles were only those connected with her

reverse of fortune. As Lucy went home, however, a very different and terrible thought darted into her mind: "What if it was her duty to listen to Mr. Sargent!" There seemed no hope, for her any more. Thomas had forsaken her utterly. If she could never be happy, ought she not to be the more anxious to make another happy? Was there any limit to the sacrifice that ought to be made for another—that is of one's self? for, alas! it would be to sacrifice no one besides. The thought was indeed a terrible one.

All the rest of that day her soul was like a drowning creature—now getting one breath of hope, now with all the billows and waves of despair going over it. The evening passed in constant terror, lest Mr. Sargent should appear, and a poor paltry little hope grew as the hands of the clock went round, and every moment rendered it less likely that he would come. At length she might go to bed without annoying her grandmother, who, by various little hints she dropped, gave her clearly to understand that she expected her to make a good match before long, and so relieve her mind about her at least.

She went to bed, and fell asleep from very weariness of emotion. But presently she started awake again; and, strange to say, it seemed to be a resolution she had formed in her sleep that brought her awake. It was that she would go to Mr. Fuller, and consult him on the subject that distressed her. After that she slept till the morning.

She had no lesson to give that day, so as soon as Mr. Fuller's church-bell began to ring, she put on her bonnet. Her grandmother asked where she was going. She told her she was going to church.

"I don't like this papist way of going to church of a week-day—at least in the middle of the day, when people ought to be at their work."

Lucy made no reply; for, without being one of those half of whose religion consists in abusing the papists, Mrs. Boxall was one of those who would turn from any good thing of which she heard first as done by those whose opinions differed from her own. Nor would it have mitigated her dislike to know that Lucy was going for the purpose of asking advice from Mr. Fuller. She would have denounced that as *confession*, and asked whether it was not more becoming in a young girl to consult her grandmother than go to a priest. Therefore, I say, Lucy kept her own counsel.

There were twenty or thirty people present when she entered St. Amos's; a grand assembly, if we consider how time and place were haunted—swarming with the dirty little demons of money-making and all its attendant beggarly cares and chicaneries—one o'clock in the City of London! It was a curious psalm they were singing, so quaint and old-fashioned, and so altogether unlike London and the nineteenth century!—the last in the common version of Tate and Brady. They were beginning the fifth verse when she entered—

"Let them who joyful hymns compose
To cymbals set their songs of praise;
Cymbals of common use, and those
That loudly sound on solemn days."

Lucy did not feel at all in sympathy with cymbals. But she knew that Mr. Fuller did, else he could not have chosen that psalm to

sing. And an unconscious operation of divine logic took place in her heart, with result such as might be represented in the following process: "Mr. Fuller is glad in God—not because he thinks himself a favorite with God, but because God is what he is, a faithful God. He is not one thing to Mr. Fuller and another to me. He is the same though I am sorrowful, I will praise him too. He will help me to be and do right, and that can never be any thing unworthy of me." So, with a trembling voice, Lucy joined in the end of the song of praise. And when Mr. Fuller's voice arose in the prayer—"O God, whose nature and property is ever to have mercy and to forgive, receive our humble petitions, and though we be tied and bound with the chain of our sins, yet let the pitifulness of thy great mercy loose us: for the honor of Jesus Christ, our Mediator and Advocate. Amen"—she joined in it with all her heart, both for herself and Thomas. Then, without the formality of a text, Mr. Fuller addressed his little congregation something as follows—

"My friends, is it not strange that with all the old church-yards lying about in London, unbusiness-like spots in the midst of shops and warehouses, 'and all the numberless goings on of life,' we should yet feel so constantly as if the business of the city were an end in itself? How seldom we see that it is only a means to an end! I will tell you in a few words one cause of this feeling as if it were an end; and then to what end it really is a means. With all the reminders of death that we have about us, not one of us feels as if he were going to die. We think of other people—even those much younger than ourselves—dying, and it always seems as if we were going to be alive when they die; and why? Just because we are not going to die. This thinking part in us feels no symptom of ceasing to be. We think on and on, and death seems far from us, for it belongs only to our bodies—not to us. So the soul forgets it. It is no part of religion to think about death. It is the part of religion, when the fact and thought of death come in, to remind us that we live forever, and that God, who sent his Son to die, will help us safe through that somewhat fearful strait that lies before us, and which often grows so terrible to those who fix their gaze upon it that they see nothing beyond it, and talk with poor Byron of the day of death as 'the first dark day of nothingness.' But this fact that *we* do not die, that only our bodies die, adds immeasurably to the folly of making what is commonly called the business of life an end instead of a means. It is not the business of life. The business of life is that which has to do with the life—with the living *us*, not with the dying part of us. How can the business of life have to do with the part that is always dying? Yet, certainly, as you will say, it must be done—only, mark this, not as an end, but as a means. As an end it has to do only with the perishing body; as a means it has infinite relations with the never-ceasing life. Then comes the question, To what end is it a means? It is a means, a great, I might say the great, means to the end for which God sends us individually into a world of sin; for that he does so, whatever the perplexities the admission may involve, who can deny, without denying that God makes us? If we were sent without any sinful

tendencies into a sinless world, we should be good, I dare say; but with a very poor kind of goodness, knowing nothing of evil, consequently never choosing good, but being good in a stupid way because we could not help it. But how is it with us? We live in a world of constant strife—a strife, as the old writers call it, following St. Paul, between the flesh and the spirit; the things belonging to the outer life, the life of the senses, the things which our Saviour sums up in the words, 'what we shall eat, and what we shall drink, and wherewithal we shall be clothed,' forcing themselves constantly on our attention, and crowding away the thought and the care that belong to the real life—the life that consists in purity of heart, in love, in goodness of all kinds—that embraces all life, using our own life only as the stand-point from which to stretch out arms of embracing toward God and toward all men. For the feeding and growth of this life, London city affords endless opportunity. Business is too often regarded as the hindrance to the spiritual life. I regard it as among the finest means the world affords for strengthening and causing to grow this inner real life. For every deed may be done according to the fashion of the outward perishing life, as an end; or it may be done after the fashion of the inward endless life—done righteously, done nobly, done, upon occasion, magnificently—ever regarded as a something to be put under the feet of the spiritual man to lift him to the height of his high calling. Making business a mean to such end, it will help us to remember that this world and the fashion of it passeth away, but that every deed done as Jesus would have done it if he had been born to begin his life as a merchant instead of a carpenter, lifts the man who so does it up toward the bosom of Him who created business and all its complications, as well as our brains and hands that have to deal with them. If you were to come and ask me, 'How shall I do in this or that particular case?' very possibly I might be unable to answer you. Very often no man can decide but the man himself. And it is part of every man's training that he should thus decide. Even if he should go wrong, by going wrong he may be taught the higher principle that would have kept him right, and which he has not yet learned. One thing is certain, that the man who wants to go right will be guided right; that not only in regard to the mission of the Saviour, but in regard to every thing, he that is willing to do the will of the Father shall know of the doctrine.—Now to God the Father," etc.

The worship over, and the congregation having retired, Lucy bent her trembling steps toward the vestry, and there being none of those generally repellent ministers, pew-openers, about, she knocked at the door. By the way, I wish clergymen were more acquainted with the nature and habits of those who in this *lowly*—alas how far from humble—office represent the gospel of welcome. They ought to have at least one sermon a year preached to them upon their duties before the whole congregation. The reception the servants of any house afford has no little share in the odor of hospitality which that house enjoys, and hospitality is no small Christian virtue. Lucy's troubled heart beat very fast as she opened the door in answer to Mr. Fuller's cheerful "Come in." But the moment she saw Mr. Fuller she

felt as if she had been guilty of an act of impropriety, and ought to have waited in the church till he came out. She drew back with a murmured "I beg your pardon," but Mr. Fuller at once re-assured her. He came forward, holding out his hand.

"How do you do, Miss Burton? I am delighted to see you. By your coming to the vestry, like a brave woman, I suppose there is something I can do for you. Let me hear all about it. Sit down."

So saying, he gave her a chair, and seated himself on the only remaining one. And as soon as she saw that Mr. Fuller was not shocked at her forwardness, such was Lucy's faith in him, that her courage returned, and with due regard to his time and her own dignity, she proceeded at once to explain to him the difficulty in which she found herself. It was a lovely boldness in the maiden, springing from faith and earnestness and need, that enabled her to set forth in a few plain words the main points of her case—that she had been engaged for many months to a youth who seemed to have forsaken her, but whom she did not know to have done so, though his conduct had been worse than doubtful, seeing he had fallen into bad company. She would never have troubled Mr. Fuller about it for that, for it was not sympathy she wanted; but there was a gentleman—and here she faltered more—to whom she was under very great obligation, and who said he loved her; and she wanted much to know whether it was her duty to yield to his entreaties.

My reader must remember that Lucy was not one of those clear-brained as well as large-hearted women who see the *rights* of a thing at once. Many of the best women may be terribly puzzled, especially when an opportunity of self-sacrifice occurs. They are always ready to think that the most painful way is the right one. This indicates a noble disposition. And the most painful way *may* be the right one; but it is not the right one *because* it is the most painful. It is the right way because it is the right way, whether it be painful or delightful; and the notion of self-sacrifice *may* be rooted in spiritual pride. Whether it be so or not, the fact that the wrong way is the least self-indulgent, is the most painful, will not prevent it from bringing with it all the consequences that belong to it: wrong doing can not set things right, however noble the motive may be. Of course the personal condemnation and the individual degradation are infinitely less than if the easiest and pleasanter way is chosen only because it is the easiest and pleasanter. But God will not make of law a child's toy, to indulge the vagaries of his best children.

When Lucy had finished setting forth her case, which the trembling of her voice, and the swelling of her tears, hardly interrupted, Mr. Fuller said—

"Now you must allow me, Miss Burton, to ask you one or two plain questions."

"Certainly, sir. Ask me whatever you please. I will answer honestly."

"That I have no doubt about. Do you love this man to whom you say you are obliged?"

"Indeed I do not. I hope I am grateful to him, and I would do any thing in return, except—"

"I understand you. It seems to me, though

this kind of thing involves many questions too delicate to be easily talked about, that, whatever he may desire at the time, it is doing any man a grievous wrong to marry him without loving him. Blinded by his love, he may desire it none the less even if you tell him that you do not love him; but the kindest thing, even to him, is to refuse. This is what seems to me the truth."

While Mr. Fuller spoke, Lucy heaved such a deep sigh of relief, that if any corroboration of what she represented as the state of her feelings had been necessary, Mr. Fuller had it. After a little pause, he went on—

"Now, one question more: Do you love the other still?"

"I do," said Lucy, bursting at last into a passion of tears. "But, perhaps," she sobbed, "I ought to give him up altogether. I am afraid he has not behaved well at all."

"To you?"

"I didn't mean that. I wasn't thinking about myself just then."

"Has he let you understand that he has forsaken you?"

"No, no. He hasn't said a word. Only I haven't seen him for so long."

"There is, then, some room for hope. If you were to resolve upon any thing now, you would be doing so without knowing what you were doing, because you do not know what he is doing. It is just possible it may be a healthy shame that is keeping him away from you. It may become your duty to give him up, but I think when it is so, it will be clearly so. God gives us all time: we should give each other time too. I wish I could see him."

"I wish, indeed, you could, sir. It seems to me that he has not been well brought up. His father is a dreadfully hard and worldly man, as my poor grandmother knows too well; and his mother is very religious, but her religion seems to me to have done my poor Thomas more harm than his father's worldliness."

"That is quite possible. When you do see him again, try to get him to come and see me. Or I will go and see him. I shall not overwhelm him with a torrent of religion which he can not understand, and which would only harden him."

"There is nothing I should wish more. But tell me one thing, Mr. Fuller: would it be right to marry him? I want to understand. Nothing looks farther off; but I want to know what is right."

"I think," returned Mr. Fuller, "that every willing heart will be taught what is right by the time that action is necessary. One thing seems clear, that while you love him—"

"I shall always love him," interrupted Lucy.

"I must speak generally," said Mr. Fuller; "and there have been a few instances," he added, with the glimmer of a smile through the seriousness of his countenance, "of young maidens, and young men no less, changing their minds about such matters. I do not say you will. But while you love him it is clear to me, that you must not accept the attentions of any one else. I could put a very hard and dreadful name upon that. There is another thing equally clear to me—that while he is unrepentant, that is, so long as he does not change his ways—turn from evil toward good—think better of it, that

is—you would be doing very wrong to marry him. I do not say when, or that ever you are bound to stop loving him; but that is a very different thing from consenting to marry him. Any influence for good that a woman has over such a man, she may exercise as much before marriage as after it. Indeed, if the man is of a poor and selfish nature, she is almost certain, as far as my observation goes, to lose her influence after her marriage. Many a woman, I fear, has married a man with the hope of reforming him, and has found that she only afforded him opportunity for growth in wickedness. I do not say that no good at all comes of it, so long as she is good, but it is the wrong way, and evil comes of it."

"I am sure you are right, Mr. Fuller. It would be dreadful to marry a bad man—or a man who had not strength, even for love of a wife, to turn from bad ways. But you don't think the hardest of my poor Thomas yet? He has been led astray, and has too much good in him to be easily made all bad."

"I too will hope so, for your sake as well as his own."

Lucy rose.

"Good-morning, Mr. Fuller. I do not know how to thank you. I only wanted leave to go on loving him. Thank you a thousand times."

"Do not thank me as if I could give you leave to do this or that. I only tell you what seems to me the truth of the matter."

"But is not that the best thing to give or to receive?"

"Yes, it is," answered, Mr. Fuller, as Lucy left the vestry.

It was with a heart wonderfully lightened that she went home to her grandmother. This new cloud of terror had almost passed away; it only lightened a little on the horizon when she thought of having again to hear what Mr. Sargent wanted to say.

That same evening he came. Lucy never lifted her eyes to his face, even when she held out her hand to him. He misinterpreted her embarrassment; and he found argument to strengthen his first impression; for a moment after, summoning all her courage, and remembering very conveniently a message she had had for him, Lucy said to her grandmother—

"Mr. Kately said he would like to see you, grannie, about the papers for our rooms. He has got some patterns."

"I have done with this world, child, and all its vanities," said Mrs. Boxall, with a touch of asperity.

"It would only be polite, though, grannie, as he is taking so much trouble about it, to go and see them. He is so kind!"

"We're going to pay him for his kindness," said the old dame, soured out of her better judgment, and jealous of Mr. Sargent supposing that they were accepting charity.

"No grannie. That nobody ever could do. Kindness is just what can't be paid for, do what you will."

"I see, you want to get rid of me," she said, rising; "so I suppose I had better go. Things are changed. Old people must learn to do as they're bid. You'll be teaching me my catechism next, I suppose."

Mrs. Boxall walked out of the room with as stiff a back as she had ever assumed in the days

of her prosperity. The moment the door closed, Mr. Sargent approached Lucy who had remained standing, and would have taken her hand, but she drew it away, and took the lead.

"I am very sorry if I have led you into any mistake, Mr. Sargent. I was so distressed at what you said the other evening, that I made this opportunity for the sake of removing at once any misapprehension. I wish to remind you that I considered the subject you resumed then as quite settled."

"But excuse me, Miss Burton. I too considered it settled; but circumstances having altered so entirely—"

"Could you suppose for a moment, that because I had lost the phantom of a fortune which I never possessed, I would accept the man—whose kindness I was always grateful for, but whose love I had refused before because I could not give him any in return?"

"No. I did not suppose so. You gave me a reason for refusing my attentions then, which I have the best ground for believing no longer exists."

"What was the reason I gave you then?"

"That you loved another."

"And what ground have I given you for supposing that such has ceased to be the case?"

"You have not given me any. He has."

Lucy started. The blood rushed to her forehead, and then back to her heart.

"Where is he?" she cried, clasping her hands. "For God's sake, tell me."

"That at least is answer enough to my presumptuous hope," returned Mr. Sargent with some bitterness.

"Mr. Sargent," said Lucy, who though trembling greatly, had now recovered her self-command, "I beg your pardon for any pain I may have occasioned you. But, by surprising the truth, you have saved me the repetition of what I told you before. Tell me what you know about Mr. Worboise."

But Mr. Sargent's feelings—those especially occupied with himself—got the better of him now, bitterly as he regretted it afterward. He felt it a wrong that such a woman should pass him by for the sake of such a man; and he answered in the heat of injury:

"All I care to know about him is, that for the sake of his game among a low set of gamblers, he staked and lost a diamond ring—a rose-diamond, which one of his companions seemed to know as the gift of a lady. That is the man for whom Lucy Burton is proud to express her devotion!"

Lucy had grown very pale; but she would hold out till Mr. Sargent was gone. She had an answer on her lips; but if she spoke he would stay. Still she would say one word for Thomas.

"Your evidence is hardly of the most trustworthy kind, Mr. Sargent. Good-evening."

"It is of his kind, anyhow, whatever that may be," he retorted, and left the room. Before he reached the bottom of the stairs, he despised himself most heartily, and rushed up again to attempt an apology. Opening the room-door, he saw Lucy lying on the floor. He thought she had fainted. But the same moment, Mrs. Boxall who had only gone up stairs, came down behind him, and he thought it best to leave and

write a letter. But Lucy had not fainted. She had only thrown herself on the floor in that agony which would gladly creep into the grave to forget itself. In all grief unmingled with anger there is the impulse to lie down. Lucy had not heard Mr. Sargent return or her grandmother re-enter, for she had been pressing her ears with her hands, as if the last sounds that had entered had wounded them grievously.

"Well, I'm sure! what next?" remarked Mrs. Boxall. "I dare say fashions *have* come to that at last!"

What she meant was not very clear; but the moment she spoke, Lucy started from the floor and left the room. She had not been long in her chamber, however, before, with the ingenuity of a lover, she had contrived to draw a little weak comfort even out of what Mr. Sargent had told her. She believed that he had done worse than part with her ring; but when the thought struck her that it must have been for the sake of redeeming that ring that he had robbed his employer, which was indeed the case, somehow or other, strange as it may seem, the offenses appeared mutually to mitigate each other. And when she thought the whole matter over in the relief of knowing that she was free of Mr. Sargent, she quite believed that she had discovered fresh grounds for taking courage.

CHAPTER XLII.

MRS. BOXALL FINDS A COMPANION IN MISFORTUNE.

At last the day arrived that Lucy and her grandmother had fixed for removing into the bookseller's house. The furniture was all Mrs. Boxall's own, though, if Mr. Worboise had thought proper to dispute the fact, there was nobody left who could have borne witness to it. Mr. Kitley shut shop a little earlier; Mr. Spelt descended from his perch; and Mr. Dolman crept out of his hole—all to bear a hand in the moving of it. It was dusk when they began, but the darkness did not hinder their diligence, and in the course of a couple of hours, all the heavier articles were in their new places. When every thing was got into something like order, it did not appear that, save for the diminution of space, they had had such a terrible downcome. Lucy was heartily satisfied with their quarters, and the feeling that she had now to protect and work for her grandmother gave a little cheerfulness to her behavior, notwithstanding the weight on her heart. Mattie was important, with an importance which not even the delight of having Miss Burton to live with them could assuage; for she had to preside at a little supper which Mr. Kitley had procured, in honor of the occasion, from the cook-shop which supplied the feasts of Spelt and Poppie. But when things were partially arranged for the night, Mrs. Boxall, who was in a very despondent condition, declared her intention of going to bed. Lucy would gladly have done the same, but she could not think of doing dishonor to the hospitality of their kind friend.

"Well, I am sorry the old lady can't be prevailed upon," said Mr. Kitley. "Them passages I know to be genuine—none of your cats or

cats' meat either. I know the very tree they grew upon—eh, princess? And now we shan't be able to eat 'em up."

"Why don't you ask Mr. Spelt to come in and help us?" said Mattie.

"Bless you! he's gone to fetch his kid; and before they come home they'll have bought their supper. They always do. I know their ways. But I do believe that's them gone up the court this minute. I'll run and see."

Mr. Kitley hurried out, and returned with Mr. Spelt, Poppie, and the steam-engine which was set down in the middle of the room.

"Ain't I been for'nate?" said the bookseller. "Poppie ain't sold all her potatoes. They was a-going to eat 'em up by the way of savin'. So we've agreed to club, and go share and share. Ain't that it, Poppie?"

Poppie grinned and gave no other answer. But her father took up the word.

"It's very kind of you to put it so, Mr. Kitley. But it seems to me we're hardly fit company for a lady like Miss Burton."

"Surely, Mr. Spelt, we haven't been neighbors so long without being fit to have our supper together?" said Lucy.

"That's very neighborly of you, miss. Let me assist you to a potato," said Spelt, going toward the steamer. "It's my belief there ain't no better taters in London, though I says it as buys 'em," he added, throwing back the lid.

"But we ain't going to begin on the taters, Spelt. You come and sit down here, and we'll have the taters put on a plate. That's the right way ain't it, princess?"

"Well, I should say so, Mr. Kitley," answered Mattie, who had hitherto been too full of her own importance even to talk. But Mr. Spelt interfered.

"Them taters," said he, with decision, "ought to be eaten fresh out of the steamer. If you turn 'em out on to a plate, I don't answer for the consequences. We'll pull 'em nearer the table, and I'll sit by 'em, with your leave, Miss Burton, and help every body as wants one."

It was remarkable with how much more decision than had belonged to him formerly, Mr. Spelt now spoke. Mr. Kitley, after a half-hour's meditation, next day, as to whether the cause of it was Poppie or the potatoes, came to the wise conclusion that between them they had made a man of him.

By this time they were all seated round the table.

"Mr. Spelt, you be parson, and say grace," said Kitley, in his usual peremptory tone.

"Why should you ask me, Mr. Kitley?" said the tailor, humbly.

"Because you know more about that sort o' thing than I do—and you know it."

Mr. Spelt said grace so devoutly that nobody could hear him.

"Why do you say grace as if you was ashamed of it, Spelt? If I was to say grace now, I would let you hear me."

"I didn't know you cared about such things," returned Spelt, evasively.

"Well," said Mr. Kitley, "no more I do—or did, rather; for I'm afraid that Mr. Fuller will get me into bad habits before he has done with me. He's a good man, Mr. Fuller, and that's more than I'd say for every one of the

cloth. They're nothing but cloth—meaning no offense Mr. Spelt, to a honest trade."

"Perhaps there are more good ones among 'em than you think, Mr. Kately," said Lucy.

"There ud need to be, miss. But I declare that man has almost made me hold my tongue against the whole sect of them. It seems a shame, with him in St. Amos's, to say a word against Mr. Potter in St. Jacob's. I never thought I should take to the church in my old age."

"Old age, Mr. Kately!" Mattie broke in. "If you talk in that way, think what you make of me!"

A general laugh greeted this remark. But Mattie was serious, and did not even smile.

Poppie never opened her lips, except to smile. But she behaved with perfect propriety. Mr. Spelt had civilized her so far, and that without much trouble. He never told any one, however, that it was with anxiety that he set out every night at half-past nine to bring her home; for more than once he had found her potato-steamer standing alone on the pavement, while she was off somewhere, looking at something, or following a crowd. He had stood nearly half an hour before she came back upon one of those occasions. All she said when she returned was, "I thought I should find you here, daddy."

But I must not linger with the company assembled in the bookseller's back-parlor; for their conversation will not help my reader on with my story.

A very little man, with very short bandy legs, was trudging along a wide and rather crowded thoroughfare, with a pair of workman's boots in his hand. It was Mr. Spelt's *sub*, Mr. Dolman, the cobbler.

"Well, Dolly, how do?" said a man in a long velvet coat, with a short pipe in his mouth and a greasy cloth cap on his head. "You're late to-night, ain't you, Dolly?"

"Them lawyers; them lawyers, Jim!" returned Dolman, enigmatically.

"What the blazes have you got to do with lawyers?" exclaimed Jim Selter, staring at the cobbler, who for the sake of balance, had now got one boot in each hand, and stood weighing the one against the other.

"Not much for my own part," returned Dolman, who was feeling very important from having assisted at his neighbors' *fitting*. "But there's good people in our court could tell you another story."

I have said that Mrs. Boxall did any thing but hold her tongue about her affairs, and Dolman had heard Mr. Worboise's behavior so thoroughly canvassed between Mr. Kately and Mr. Spelt, that he was familiar with the main points of the case.

"Come and have a drop of beer," said Jim, "and tell us all about it."

No greater temptation could have been held out to Dolman. But he had a certain sense of duty that must first be satisfied.

"No, Jim. I never touch a drop till I've taken my work home."

"Where's that?" asked Jim.

"Down by the Minories," answered the cobbler.

"Come along then. I'll help you carry it."

"Tain't heavy. I'll carry it myself," answer-

ed Dolman, who, having once been robbed on a similar occasion, seemed, in regard to boots, to have lost his faith in humanity.

"I can't think, Dolly, why you roost so far from your work. Now it's different with me. My work's here and there and everywhere; but yours is allus in the same place."

"It gives me a walk, Jim. Besides it's respectable. It's having two places of one's own. My landlady, Mrs. Dobbs, knows that my shop's in a fashionable part, and she's rather proud of me for a lodger in consequence. And my landlord, that's Mr. Spelt, a tailor, and well-to-do—how's he to know that I ain't got a house in the suburbs?" answered Dolman, laughing.

The moment he had got his money, and delivered the boots—for that was the order of business between Dolman and his customers—they betook themselves to a public-house in the neighborhood, where Dolman conveyed to Jim, with very tolerable correctness, the whole story of Mrs. Boxall's misfortunes. Before he reached the end of it however, Jim, who had already "put a name upon something" with two of his acquaintance that night, got rather misty, and took his leave of Dolman with the idea that Lucy and her grandmother had been turned out, furniture and all, into the street, without a place to go to.

Much as she had dreaded leaving her own house as she had always considered it, Mrs. Boxall had a better night in her new abode than she had had for months, and rose in the morning with a surprising sense of freshness. Wonderful things come to us in sleep—none perhaps more wonderful than this reviving of the colors of the faded soul from being laid for a few hours in the dark—in *God's ebony box*, as George Herbert calls the night. It is as if the wakeful angels had been busy all the night preening the draggled and ruffled wings of their sleeping brothers and sisters. Finding that Lucy was not yet dressed, she went down alone to the back parlor, and, having nothing else to do, began to look at the birds, of which, I have already informed my reader, Mr. Kately kept a great many, feeding and cleaning them himself, and teaching the more gifted, starlings and parrots, and such like birds of genius, to speak. If he did any thing in the way of selling as well as buying them, it was quite in a private way—as a gentleman may do with his horses.

"Good-morning, sir," screamed a huge grey parrot the moment she entered, regardless of the sex of his visitor. It was one the bookseller had bought of a sailor somewhere about the docks, a day or two before, and its fame had not yet spread through the neighborhood, consequently Mrs. Boxall was considerably startled by the salutation. "Have you spliced the main-brace this morning, sir?" continued the parrot, and, without waiting for a reply, like the great ladies who inquire after an inferior's family and then look out of the window, burst into the song, "There's a sweet little chernb," and, stopping as suddenly at the word, followed it with the inquiry, "How's your mother?" upon which point Mrs. Boxall may, without any irreverence, be presumed to have been a little in the dark. The next moment the unprincipled animal poured forth his innocent soul in a torrent of imprecations which, growing as furious as fast, reached the ears of Mr. Kately. He entered in a moment

and silenced the animal with prompt rebuke, and the descent of an artificial night in the shape of a green cloth over his cage—the vengeance of the lower Jove. The creature exploded worse than ever for awhile, and then subsided. Meantime the bookseller turned to Mrs. Boxall to apologize.

"I haven't had him long, ma'am—only a day or two. He's been ill brought up, as you see, poor bird! I shall have a world of trouble to cure him of his bad language. If I can't cure him I'll ring his neck."

"The poor creature doesn't know better," said Mrs. Boxall. "Wouldn't it be rather hard to kill him for it?"

"Well, but what am I to do? I can't have such words running out and in of my princess's ears all day."

"But you could sell him, or give him away, you know, Mr. Kiteley."

"A pretty present he would be, the rascal! And for selling him, it would be wickedness to put the money in my pocket. There was a time, ma'am, when I would have taught him such words myself, and thought no harm of it; but now, if I were to sell that bird, ma'am—how should I look Mr. Fuller in the face next Sunday? No; if I can't cure him, I must twist his neck. We'll eat him, ma'am, I dare say he's nice."

He added in a whisper: "I wanted him to hear me. There's no telling how much them creatures understand."

But before Mr. Kiteley had done talking, Mrs. Boxall's attention was entirely taken up with another bird, of the paroquet species. It was the most awfully grotesque, the most pitifully comic animal in creation. It had a green head, with a band of red round the back of it; while white feathers came down on each side of its huge beak, like the grey whiskers of a retired military man. This head looked enormous for the rest of the body, for from the nape of the neck to the tail, except a few long feathers on the shoulders of its wings, blue like those of a jay, there was not another feather on its body: it was as bare as if it had been plucked for roasting. A more desolate, poverty-stricken, wretched object, can hardly be conceived. The immense importance of his head and beak and grey whiskers, with the abject nakedness—more than nakedness—*pluckedness* of his body was quite beyond laughing at. It was far fitter to make one cry. But the creature was so absolutely, perfectly self-satisfied, without a notion of shame or even discomfort, that it appeared impossible he could ever have seen himself behind. He must surely have fancied himself as glorious as in his palmiest days. And his body was so thin, and his skin so old and wrinkled—I wish I could set him in the margin for my younger readers to see him. He hopped from place to place, and turned himself round before the spectators with such an absence of discomposure, that one could not help admiring his utter *sang-froid*, almost envying his perfect self-possession. Observing that his guest was absorbed in the contemplation of the phenomenon, Mr. Kiteley said—

"You're a-wondering at poor Widdles. Widdles was an old friend of mine I named the bird after before he lost his great-coat all but the collar. Widdles! Widdles!"

The bird came close up to the end of his perch,

and setting his head on one side, looked at his master with one round yellow eye.

"He's the strangest bird I ever saw," said Mrs. Boxall. "If you talked of wringing *his* neck, now, I shouldn't wonder, knowing you for a kind-hearted man, Mr. Kiteley."

"Wring Widdle's neck!" exclaimed the bookseller. "His is the last neck I would think of wringing. See how bravely he bears misfortune. Nobody could well lose more than Widdles, and nobody could well take it lighter. He's a sermon, is that bird. His whole worldly wealth consists in his wig. They was a fine pair once, only he was always henpecked. His mate used to peck him because he wasn't able to peck her, for he was the smaller of the two. They always reminded me of Spelt and his wife. But when they were took ill, both of them, she gave in, and he wouldn't. Death took his feathers, and left him jolly without them. Bless him, old Widdles!"

"Well, it's a curious taste of yours, I must say, Mr. Kiteley. But some people, no more than some birds, ain't to be accounted for."

Mr. Kiteley chose to consider this a good sally of wit, and laughed loud and long. Mrs. Boxall laughed a little too, and was pleased with herself. And from that moment she began to take to the bird.

"Try him with a bit of sugar," said Mr. Kiteley, going to the carved cabinet to get a piece, which he then handed to Mrs. Boxall.

The bird was friendly and accepted it. Mrs. Boxall was pleased with him now as well as with herself, and before long a firm friendship was established between the two, which went so far that Widdles would, when she put her hand into his cage, perch upon her bony old finger, and allow himself to be lifted out. There was no fear of his even attempting to fly away, for he was perfectly aware of his utter incapacity in that direction of bird-like use and custom. Before many days had passed she had become so much attached to the bird that his company did not a little to shield her from the inroads of recurrent regret, mortification, and resentment.

One evening, when she came home from her now rather numerous engagements, Lucy found her grandmother seated at the table, with the bird in her hand, rubbing him all over very gently for fear of hurting him, with something she took with her finger from a little pot on the table.

"What *are* you doing with Widdles, grannie?" she said.

"Trying a little bear's grease, child. Why shouldn't I?" she added, angrily, when Lucy laughed.

"No reason in the world why you shouldn't, grannie. You mustn't mind my laughing."

"I don't see why any body should laugh at misfortune," returned Mrs. Boxall, severely. "How would you like to be in the condition of this bird yourself?"—without a feather, she was going to say, but just pulled up in time. She could not help laughing herself now, but she went on, nevertheless, with her work of charity. "Who knows," she said, "but they may grow again?" "Grow again!" shrieked the grey parrot, in the tone of a violin in unskillful hands.

"Yes, grow again, you witch!" said Mrs. Boxall. "I don't see why the devil shouldn't be in you as well as in your betters. Why shouldn't they grow again?"

"Grow again!" reiterated the grey parrot. "Grow again! Widdles! Widdles! Widdles! Ha! ha! ha!"

"It shall grow again," retorted the old lady. "If bear's grease won't do, I'll spend my last penny on a bottle of Macassar; and if it doesn't grow then I'll pluck your back and stick them into his."

Mrs. Boxall had got into a habit of talking thus with the bird, which the bookseller had already nearly cured of his wicked words by instant punishment following each offense.

"Stick them into his!" cried the bird like an echo, and refused to speak again.

Sometimes, however, he would say a naughty word evidently for the sake of testing his master, or as if he wondered what punishment he would have this time—for the punishments were various. On such occasions he would shriek out the word, "Duck his head," and dart to the opposite side of the cage, keeping one eye full on his master, with such an expression that his profile looked like a whole face with a Cyclopean one eye in it.

Whether Mrs. Boxall was at last successful in her benevolent exertions I am unable to say, for her experiments were still going on when the period arrived with which my story must close. She often asserted that she saw them beginning to sprout: and to see her with spectacles on nose, examining the poor withered bluish back of Widdles, was ludicrous or touching, according to the humor of the beholder. Widdles seemed to like the pains she took with him, however; and there is no doubt of one thing, that she was rewarded for her trouble tenfold in being thus withdrawn from the contemplation of her own wrongs and misfortunes. Widdles thus gave her many a peaceful hour she would not, in all probability, have otherwise enjoyed. Nor were her attentions confined to him: through him, she was introduced to the whole regiment of birds, which she soon began assisting Mr. Kitley to wait upon. Mattie had never taken to them. While grannie, as she, too, called her, was busy with them, Mattie would sit beside at her needlework, scarcely looking up even when she addressed an occasional remark to grannie. It was a curious household, and fell into many singular groups.

But here I must leave Mrs. Boxall with her bird-companions, which, save for the comfort they afforded her in taking her mind off herself, have no active part in the story. Through Mrs. Morgenstern's influence and exertions, Lucy soon had as much to do in the way of teaching as she could compass, and her grandmother knew no difference in her way of living from what she had been accustomed to.

CHAPTER XLIII.

WHAT THOMAS WAS ABOUT.

WHEN Thomas left Rotherhithe with Jim Salter, he had no idea in his head but to get away somewhere. Like the ostrich, he wanted some sand to stick his head into. But wherever he went there were people, even policemen, about, and not one of the places they went through looked more likely to afford him shelter than another. Had he given Jim any clearer informa-

tion concerning the necessity he was in of *keeping dark*, perhaps he would have done differently with him. As it was, he contented himself with piloting him about the lower docks and all that maritime part of London. They walked about the whole day till Thomas was quite weary. Nor did refuge seem nearer than before. All this time the police might be on his track, coming nearer and nearer like the blood-hounds that they were. They had some dinner at an eating-house, where Thomas's fastidiousness made yet a farther acquaintance with dirt and disorder, and he felt that he had fallen from his own sphere into a lower order of things, and could never more climb into the heaven from whence he had fallen. But the fear of yet a lower fall into a prison and the criminal's doek kept him from dwelling yet upon what he had lost. At night Jim led him into Ratcliff Highway, the Paradise of sailors at sea—the hell of sailors on shore. Thomas shrunk from the light that filled the street from end to end, blazing from innumerable public-houses, through the open doors of which he looked across into back parlors, where sailors and women sat drinking and gambling, or down long passages to great rooms with curtained doorways, whence came the sounds of music and dancing, and through which passed and re-passed sea-faring figures and gaily bedizened vulgar girls, many of whom, had the weather been warmer, would have been hanging about the street-doors, laughing and *chaffing* the passers-by, or getting up a dance on the pavement to the sound of the music within. It was a whole streetful of low revelry. Poor Jack! Such is his coveted reward on shore for braving Death, and defying him to his face. He escapes from the embrace of the bony phantom to hasten to the arms of his far more fearful companion—the nightmare Life-in-Death—"who thickens man's blood with cold." Well may that pair casting their dice on the skeleton ship symbolize the fate of the sailor, for to the one or the other he falls a victim.

Opposite an open door Jim stopped to speak to an acquaintance. The door opened directly upon a room ascending a few steps from the street. Round a table sat several men, sailors of course, apparently masters of coasting vessels. A lithe lascar was standing with one hand on the table, leaning over it, and talking swiftly, with snaky gestures of the other hand. He was in a rage. The others burst out laughing. Thomas saw something glitter in the hand of the Hindoo. One of the sailors gave a cry, and started up, but staggered and fell.

Before he fell the lascar was at the door, down the steps with a bound, and out into the street. Two men were after him at full speed, but they had no chance with the light-built Indian.

"The villain has murdered a man, Jim," said Thomas—"in there—look!"

"Oh I dare say he ain't much the worse," returned Jim. "They're always a outing with their knives here."

For all his indifference, however, Jim started after the Hindoo, but he was out of sight in another moment.

Jim returned.

"He's crowding all sail for Tiger Bay," said he. "I shouldn't care to follow him there. Here's a Peeler."

"Come along, Jim," said Thomas. Don't stand here all the night."

"Why *you* ain't afraid o' the place are you, gov'nor?"

Thomas tried to laugh, but he did not enjoy the allusion—in the presence of a third person especially.

"Well, good-night," said Jim to his acquaintance.

"By the way," he resumed, "do you know the figure of Potts's ken?"

"What Potts? I don't know any Potts."

"Yes you do. Down somewhere about Lime 'us, you know. We saw him that night—"

Here Jim whispered his companion, who answered aloud:

"Oh, yes, I know. Let me see. It's the Marmaid, I think. You ain't a-going there, are you?"

"Don't know. Mayhap. I'm only taking this gen'leman a sight-seeing. He's from the country."

"Good-night then." And so they parted.

It was a sudden idea of Jim's to turn in the direction of the man whose child Thomas had saved. But Thomas did not know where he was taking him.

"Where will you sleep to-night, gov'nor?" asked Jim, as they walked along.

"I don't know," answered Thomas. "I must leave you to find me a place. But I say, Jim, can you think of any thing I could turn to? for my money won't last me long."

"Turn to!" echoed Jim. "Why a man had need be able to turn to every thing by turns to make a livin' nowadays. You ain't been used to hard work, by your hands. Do you know yer bible well?"

"Pretty well," answered Thomas; "but I don't know what that can have to do with making a living."

"Oh, don't you, gov'nor? Perhaps you don't know what yer bible means. It means pips and picturs."

"You mean the cards. No, no. I've had enough of that. I don't mean ever to touch them again."

"Hum! Bitten," said Jim to himself, but so that Thomas heard him.

"Not very badly, Jim. In the pocket-book I told you I lost I had a hundred pounds, won at cards the night before last."

"My eye!" exclaimed Jim. "What a devil of a pity! But why don't you try your luck again?" he asked, after a few moments of melancholy devoted to the memory of the money.

"Look here, Jim. I don't know where to go to sleep. I have a comfortable room that I dare not go near; a father, a rich man I believe, who would turn me out; and in short I've ruined myself forever with card-playing. The sight of a pack would turn me sick, I do believe."

"Sorry for you, gov'nor. I know a fellow, though, that makes a good thing of the thimble."

"I've no turn for tailoring, I'm afraid."

"Beggin' your pardon, gov'nor, but you are a muff! You never thought I meant a gen'leman like you to take to a beastly trade like that. I meant the thimble and peas, you know, at fairs, and such like. It's all fair, you know. You tell 'em they don't know where the pea

is and they don't. I know a friend o' mine 'll put you up to it for five or six bob. Bless you!" there's room for free trade and money made."

Thomas could hardly be indignant with Jim for speaking according to his kind. But when he looked into it, it stung him to the heart to think that every magistrate would regard him as capable of taking to the profession of thimble-rigging after what he had been already guilty of. Yet in all his dealings with cards, Thomas had been scrupulously honorable. He said no more to Jim about finding something to do.

They had gone a good way, and Thomas's strength was beginning to fail him quite. Several times Jim had inquired after the *Marmaid*, always in public-houses, where he paid for the information or none, as the case might be, by putting a name upon something at Thomas's expense; so that he began to be rather uplifted.

At length he called out joyfully—

"Here's a fishy one, gov'nor, at last! Come along."

So saying, he pushed the swing door, to which was attached a leather strap to keep it from swinging outward, and entered. It admitted them to a bar served by a big fat man with an apron whose substratum was white at the depth of several strata of dirt, and a nose much more remarkable for color than drawing, being in both more like a half-ripe mulberry than any thing else in nature. He had little round watery eyes, and a face indicative of nothing in particular, for it had left its original conformation years behind. As soon as they entered Jim went straight up to the landlord, and stared at him for a few moments across the counter. "You don't appear to know me, gov'nor?" he said, for the many things he had drank to find the way had made him *barky*. His vocabulary of address, it will be remarked, was decidedly defective.

"Well, I can't take upon me to say as I do," answered the man, putting his thumbs in the strings of his apron, and looking at Jim with a mixture of effort and suspicion on his puffy face. "And I'll be bound to say," remarked Jim turning toward Thomas, "that you don't know this gen'leman either. Do 'ee now gov'nor? On yer honor, right as a trivet? No, ye don't."

"Can't say I do."

"Look at him, then. Ain't he fit to remember? Don't he look respectable?"

"Come, none o' your chaff! Say what you've got to say. What do you want?"

"Cut it short, Jim," said Thomas.

"How's your young marmaid as took to the water so nat'ral at the Horsleydown tother day, Mr. Potts?" asked Jim, leaning on his elbows on the counter. "Jolly," answered the landlord.

"Was you by?"

"Wasn't I, then! And there's a gov'nor was nearer than I was. Mr. Potts, that the very gen'leman as went a header into the water and saved her, Mr. Potts. Hold up yer head gov'nor."

"You're a chaffin' of me, I know," said Potts.

"Come, come, Jim, don't make a fool of me," said Thomas. "I wish I had known you were bringing me here. Come along. I won't stand it."

But Jim was leaning over the counter, speaking in a whisper to the down-bent landlord.

"You don't mean it?" said the latter.

"Ask the mis'ess, then," said Jim.

"You don't mean it!" repeated the landlord, in a husky voice, and with increase of energy. Then looking toward Thomas, "What will he take?" he said, and with the words turned his back upon Jim, and his face toward a shelf on which stood his choicest bottles between two cask-like protuberances. He got down one of brandy, but Thomas, who was vexed at being brought there as if he wanted some acknowledgment of the good deed he had been fortunate enough to perform, refused to take any thing.

"What will you take then?" said the man, whose whole stock of ideas seemed to turn upon taking.

But at the moment a woman entered from behind the shop.

"There, mis'ess," said her husband, "can you tell that gentleman is?"

She looked at him for a moment, and exclaimed—

"Bless my soul! it's the gentleman that took our Bessie out of the water. How do you do, sir?" she continued, with mingled pleasure and respect, as she advanced from behind the counter, and courtesied to Thomas.

"None the worse for my ducking, thank you," said Thomas, holding out his hand in the delightful word of real friendship always gives.

She shook it warmly, and would hardly let it go.

"Oh! isn't he then?" muttered Jim, mysteriously, but loud enough for Potts to hear.

"Won't you come in, sir?" said the woman, turning to lead the way.

"Thank you," answered Thomas. "I have been walking about all day, and am very tired. If you would let me sit down awhile—and—perhaps it wouldn't be giving you too much trouble to ask for a cup of tea, for my head aches rather."

"Come in sir," she said, in a tone of truest hospitality. "That I will, with pleasure, I'm sure."

Thomas followed her into a dingy back room, where she made him lie down on a sofa from which he would have recoiled three days ago, but for which he was very grateful now. She then bustled about to get him some tea, and various little delicacies besides, in the shape of ham and shrimps, etc., etc. It was pretty clear from her look, and the way she pressed her offerings of gratitude, that she had a true regard for inward comforts, if not for those outward luxuries of neatness and cleanliness.

The moment Thomas was out of the shop, Jim Salter began to be more communicative with Mr. Potts.

"None the worse! said he?" demanded he reflectively. "Oh, no. That's the way your quality talk about a few bank-notes. Nothing but a hundred pounds the worst. Oh! no."

"You don't mean it?" said Mr. Potts, making his eyes as round as two sixpences.

"Well, to be sure," said Salter, "I can't take my davy on it; 'cause as how I've only his word for it. But he don't look like a cony-catcher, do he? He's a deal too green for that, I can tell you. Well he is green!" repeated Jim, bursting into a quiet chuckle.

"I don't mean he's a fool neither. There's a vasty heap o' difference betwixt a leek in yer eye, and a turnip in yer brain-box. Ain't there now, gov'nor?"

"You don't mean it?" said Mr. Potts, staring more than ever.

"What don't I mean, Mr. Potts?"

"You don't mean that that 'ere chap? What do you mean about them hundred pounds?"

"Now I'll tell 'ee, gov'nor. It's a great pleasure to me to find I can tell a story so well."

"There you are—off again, no mortal man can tell to where. You ain't told me no story yet."

"Ain't I? How came it then, gov'nor, that I ha' made you forget your usual 'ospitable manners? If I hadn't ha' been telling you a story, you'd ha'—I know you ha' asked me to put a name upon something long ago."

Mr. Potts laughed, and saying, "I beg yer pardon, Mr. Salter, though I'm sure I don't remember ever meetin' of you afore, only that's no consequence; the best o' friends must meet some time for the first time," turned his face to the shelf as he had done before, and after a little hesitation, seemed to conclude that it would be politic to take down the same bottle. Jim tossed off the half of his glassful, and setting the rest on the counter, began his story. Whether he wished to represent himself as Thomas's confidant, or, having come to his conclusions to the best of his ability, believed himself justified in representing them as the facts of the case, it is not necessary to inquire; the account he gave of Thomas's position was this: That when Thomas went over-board after little Bessie, he had in the breast of his coat a pocket-book, with a hundred pounds of his master's in it; that he dared not go home without it; that the police were after him; and, in short, that he was in a terrible fix. Mr. Potts listened with a general stare, and made no reply.

"You'll give him a bed to-night, won't you, gov'nor? I'll come back in the morning and see what can be done."

Jim finished his glass of brandy as if it had been only the last drops, and set it on the counter with a world of suggestion in the motion, to which Mr. Potts mechanically replied by filling it again, saying as he did so, in a voice a little huskier than usual, "All right." Jim tossed off the brandy, smacked his lips, said "Thank you, and good-night," and went out of the beer-shop. Mr. Potts stood for five minutes motionless, then went slowly to the door of the back parlor, and called his wife. Leaving Thomas to finish his meal by himself, Mrs. Potts joined her husband and they had a talk together. He told her what Jim had just communicated to him, and they held a consultation, the first result of which was that Mrs. Potts proceeded to get a room, the best she could offer, ready for Thomas. He accepted her hospitality with gratitude, and was glad to go to bed.

Meantime, leaving his wife to attend to the thirst of the public, Mr. Potts set out to find his brother-in-law, the captain of a collier trading between Newcastle and London, who was at the moment in the neighborhood, but whose vessel was taking in ballast somewhere down the river. He came upon him where he had expected to find him, and told him the whole story.

The next morning, when Thomas, more miserable than ever, after rather a sleepless night,

came down stairs early, he found his breakfast waiting for him, but not his breakfast only: a huge sea-faring man, with short neck and square shoulders, dressed in a blue pilot-coat, was seated in the room. He rose when Thomas entered, and greeted him with a bow made up of kindness and patronage. Mrs. Potts came in the same moment.

"This is my brother, Captain Smith of the *Raven*," she said, "come to thank you, sir, for what you did for his little pet, Bessie."

"Well, I donnow," said the captain, with a gruff breeziness of manner. "I came to ask the gentleman if, bein' on the loose, he wouldn't like a trip to Newcastle, and share my little cabin with me."

It was the first glimmer of gladness that had lightened Thomas's horizon for what seemed to him an age.

"Thank you, thank you!" he said; "it is the very thing for me."

And as he spoke, the awful London wilderness vanished, and open sea and sky filled the world of his imaginings.

"When do you sail?" he asked.

"To-night, I hope, with the ebb," said the captain; "but you had better come with me, as soon as you've had your breakfast, and we'll go on board at once. You needn't mind about your chest. You can rough it a little, I dare say. I can lend you a jersey that'll do better than your long-shore tops."

Thomas applied himself to his breakfast with vigor. Hope even made him hungry. How true it is that we live by hope! Before he had swallowed his last mouthful, he started from his seat.

"You needn't be in such a hurry," said the captain. "There's plenty of time. Stow your prog."

"I have quite done. But I must see Mr. Potts for a minute."

He went to the bar, and finding that Jim had not yet made his appearance, asked the landlord to change him a sovereign, and give half to Jim.

"It's too much," said Mr. Potts.

"I promised him a day's wages."

"Five shillings is over enough, besides the brandy I gave him last night. He don't make five shillings every day."

Thomas, however, to the list of whose faults stinginess could not be added, insisted on Jim's having the half sovereign, for he felt that he owed him far more than that.

In pulling out the small remains of his money, wondering if he could manage to buy a jersey for himself before starting, he brought out with it two bits of pasteboard, the sight of which shot a pang to his heart: they were the pawn-tickets for his watch and Lucy's ring, which he had bought back from the holder on that same terrible night on which he had lost almost every thing worth having. It was well he had only thrust them into the pocket of his trousers, instead of putting them into his pocket-book. They had stuck to the pocket and been dried with it, had got loose during the next day, and now came to light, reminding him of his utter meanness, not to say dishonesty, in parting with the girl's ring that he might follow his cursed play. The gleam of gladness which the hope of escaping

from London gave him had awakened his conscience more fully; and he felt the despicableness of his conduct as he had never felt it before. How could he have done it? The ring to wear which he had been proud because it was not his own, but Lucy's, he had actually exposed to the contamination of vile hands—had actually sent from her pure lovely person into the pocket of a foul talker, and thence to a pawnbroker's shop. He could have torn himself to pieces at the thought. And now that she was lost to him forever, was he to rob her of her mother's jewel as well? He *must* get it again. But if he went after it now, even if he had the money to redeem it, he might run into the arms of the searching Law, and he and it too would be gone. But he had not the money. The cold dew broke out on his face, as he stood beside the pump-handles of the beer-shop. But Mr. Potts had been watching him for some time. He knew the look of those tickets, and dull as his brain was, with a dullness that was cousin to his red nose, he divined at once that Thomas's painful contemplation had to do with some effects of which those tickets were the representatives. He laid his hand on Thomas's shoulder from behind. Thomas gave a great start.

"I beg your pardon for frightening of you, sir," said Mr. Potts; "but I believe a long experience in them things makes me able to give you good advice."

"What things?" asked Thomas.

"Them things," repeated Potts, putting a fat forefinger first on the one and then on the other pawn-ticket. "'Twasn't me, nor yet Bessie. 'Tis long since I was in my uncle's. All I had to do there was a-gettin' of 'em down the joant. I never sent much up it: my first wife, Joan—not Bessie, bless her! Now I ain't no witch, but I can see with 'alf a heye that you've got summat at your uncle's you don't like to leave there, when you're a-goin' a voyagin' to the ends o' the earth. Have you got the money as well as the tickets?"

"Oh dear, no!" answered Thomas, almost crying.

"Come now," said Potts, kindly, "sweep out the chinley. It's no use missing the crooks and corners, and having to send a boy up after all. Sweep it out. Tell me all about it, and I'll see what I can do—or can't do, it may be."

Thomas told him that the tickets were for a watch—a gold watch, with a compensation balance—and a diamond ring. He didn't care about the watch; but he would give his life to get the ring again.

"Let me look at the tickets. How much did you get on 'em, separate?"

Thomas said he did not know, but gave him the tickets to examine.

Potts looked at them. "You don't care so much for the watch?" he said.

"No, I don't," answered Thomas; "though my mother did give it me," he added ruefully.

"Why don't you offer 'em both of the tickets for the ring, then?" said Potts.

"What?" said Thomas. "I don't see—"

"You give 'em to me," returned Potts. "Here, Bess! you go in and have a chat with the captain—I'm going out, Bessie, for an hour. Tell the captain not to go till I come back."

So saying Potts removed his white apron, put

on a black frock coat and hat, and went out, taking the tickets with him.

Mrs. Potts brought a tumbler of grog for her brother, and he sat sipping it. Thomas refused to join him; for he reaped this good from his sensitive organization, that since the night on which it had helped to ruin him, he could scarcely endure even the smell of strong drink. It was rather more than an hour before Mr. Potts returned, during which time Thomas had been very restless and anxious. But at last his host walked into the back room, laid a small screw of paper before him, and said—

“There’s your ring, sir. You won’t want your watch this voyage. I’ve got it, though; but I’m forced to keep it, in case I should be behind with my rent. Any time you look in, I shall have it, or know where it is.”

Thomas did what he could to express his gratitude, and took the ring with a wonderful feeling of relief. It seemed like a pledge of farther deliverance. He begged Mr. Potts to do what he pleased with the watch; he didn’t care if he never saw it again; and hoped it would be worth more to him than what it had cost him to redeem them both. Then, after many kind farewells, he took his leave with the captain of the *Raven*. As they walked along, he could not help looking round every few yards; but after his new friend had taken him to a shop where he bought a blue jersey and a glazed hat, and tied his coat up in a handkerchief, his sole bundle of luggage, he felt more comfortable. In a couple of hours he was on board of the *Raven*, a collier brig of a couple of hundred tons. They set sail the same evening, but not till they reached the Nore did Thomas begin to feel safe from pursuit.

The captain seemed a good deal occupied with his own thoughts, and there were few things they understood in common, so that Thomas was left mostly to his own company; which, though far from agreeable, was no doubt the very best for him under the circumstances. For it was his real self that he looked in the face—the self that told him what he was, showed him whence he had fallen, what he had lost, how he had hitherto been wasting his life, and how his carelessness had at length thrown him over a precipice upon which he could not climb—there was no foothold upon it. But this was not all; he began to see not only his faults, but the weakness of his character, the refusal to combat which had brought him to this pass. His behavior to Lucy was the bitterest thought of all. She looked ten times more lovely to him now that he had lost her. That she should despise him was terrible—even more terrible the likelihood that she would turn the rich love of her strong heart upon some one else. How she had entreated him to do her justice! and, he saw now that she had done so even more for his sake than for her own. He had not yet any true idea of what Lucy was worth. He did not know how she had grown since the time when, with all a girl’s inexperience, she had first listened to his protestations. While he had been going down the hill, she had been going up. Long before they had been thus parted, he would not have had a chance of winning her affections had he had then to make the attempt. But he did see that she was infinitely beyond him, infinitely better than—to use a common phrase—he could have deserved

if he had been as worthy as he fancied himself.

I say a *common phrase*, because no man can ever *deserve* a woman. Gradually—by what gradations he could not have told—the truth, working along with his self-despising showed him something of all this; and it was the first necessity of a nature like his to be taught to look down on himself. As long as he thought himself more than somebody, no good was to be expected of him. Therefore, it was well for him that the worthlessness of his character should break out and show itself in some plainly worthless deed, that he might no longer be able to hide himself from the conviction and condemnation of his own conscience. Hell had come at last; and he burned in its fire.

He was very weary, and went to bed in a berth in the cabin. But he was awaked while it was yet quite dark by the violent rolling and pitching of the vessel, and the running to and fro overhead. He got up at once, dressed in haste, and clambered up the companion-ladder. It was a wild scene. It had come on to blow hard. The brig was under reefed topsails and jib; but Tom as knew nothing of sea affairs. She was a good boat, and rode the seas well. There was just light enough for him to see the water by the white rents in its darkness. Fortunately, he was one of those few favored individuals in whose nerves the motion of a vessel find no response—I mean he did not know what sea-sickness was. And that storm came to him a wonderful gift from the Father who had not forgotten his erring child—so strangely did it harmonize with his troubled mind. New strength, even hope, invaded his weary heart from the hiss of the wind through the cordage as it bellied out from the masts; his soul rejoiced in the heave of the wave under the bows and its swift rush astern; and though he had to hold hard by the weather shrouds, not a shadow of fear crossed his mind. This may have partly come from life being to him now a worthless thing, save as he had some chance of—he did not know what; for although he saw no way of recovering his lost honor, and therefore considered that eternal disgrace was his, even if God and man forgave him, there was yet a genuine ray of an unknown hope borne into him, as I say, from the crests of those broken waves. But I think it was natural to Thomas to fear nothing that merely involved danger to himself. In this respect he possessed a fine physical courage. It was in moral courage—the power of looking human anger and contempt in the face, and holding on his own way—that he was deficient. I believe that this came in a great measure from a delicate, sensitive organization. He could look a storm in the face; but a storm in a face he could not endure; he quailed before it. He would sail ever a smooth human sea, if he might; when a wind rose there, he would be under bare poles in a moment. Of course this sensitiveness was not in itself an evil, being closely associated with his poetic tendencies, which ought to have been the centre from which all the manlier qualities were influenced for culture and development; but he had been spoiled in every way, not least by the utterly conflicting discords of nature, objects, and character in his father and mother. But although a man may be physically brave and morally a coward—a fact too well

known to be insisted upon—a facing of physical danger will help the better courage in the man whose will is at all awake to cherish it; for the highest moral courage is born of the will, and not of the organization. The storm wrought thus along with all that was best in him. In the fiercest of it that night, he found himself often kissing Lucy's ring, which, as soon as he began to know that they were in some danger, and not till then, he had, though with a strong feeling of the sacrifice of the act, ventured to draw once more upon his unworthy hand.

The wind increased as the sun rose. If he could only have helped the men staggering to and fro, as they did on the great sea in the days of old! But he did not know one rope from another. Two men were at the tiller. One was called away on some emergency aloft. Thomas sprang to his place.

"I will do whatever you tell me," he said to the steersman; "only let me set a man free."

Then he saw it was the captain himself. He gave a nod, and a squirt of tobacco-juice, as cool as if he had been steering with a light gale over a rippling sea. Thomas did his best, and in five minutes had learned to obey the word the captain gave him as he watched the binnacle. About an hour after the sun rose the wind began to moderate; and before long the captain gave up the helm to the mate, saying to Thomas—

"We'll go and have some breakfast. You've earned your rations, anyhow. Your father ought to have sent you to sea. It would have made a man of you."

This was not very complimentary. But Thomas had only a suppressed sigh to return for answer. He did not feel himself worth defending any more.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THOMAS RETURNS TO LONDON.

AFTER this Thomas made rapid progress in the favor of Captain Smith. He had looked upon him as a landlubber before, with the contempt of his profession; but when he saw that, clerk as he was, he was yet capable at sea, he began to respect him. And as Thomas wakened up more and more to an interest in what was going on around him, he did not indulge in giving him fool's answers to the questions he asked, as so many sea-farers would have been ready to do; and he soon found that Thomas's education, though it was by no means a first-rate one, enabled him to ask more questions with regard to the laws of wind and water and the combination of forces than he was quite able to solve. Before they reached the end of the voyage, Thomas knew the rigging pretty well, and could make himself useful on board. Anxious to ingratiate himself with the captain—longing almost unconsciously for the support of some human approbation, the more that he had none to give himself—he laid himself out to please him. Having a tolerably steady head, he soon found himself able to bear a hand in taking in a reef in the foretop-sail, and he could steer by the course with tolerable steadiness. The sailors were a not unsocial set of men, and as he presumed upon nothing, they too gave him what help they could,

not without letting off a few jokes at his expense, in the laughter following on which he did his best to join. The captain soon began to order him about like the rest, which was the best kindness he could have shown him; and Thomas's obedience was more than prompt—it was as pleasant as possible. He had on his part some information to give the captain; and their meals in the cabin together were often merry enough.

"Do you think you could ever make a sailor of me?" asked Tom one day.

"Not a doubt of it, my boy," the captain answered. "A few voyages more, and you'll go aloft like a monkey."

"Where do you think of making your next voyage, sir?" asked Tom.

"Well, I'm part owner of the brig, and can do pretty much as I like. I did think of Dundee."

"I should have thought they have coal enough of their own thereabouts."

"A cargo of English coal never comes amiss. It's better than theirs by a long way."

"Would you take me with you?"

"To be sure, if you can't do better."

"I can't. I don't want any thing but my rations, you know."

"You'll soon be worth your wages. I can't say you are yet, you know."

"Of course not. You must have your full crew besides."

"We're one hand short this voyage; and you've done something to fill the gap."

"I'm very glad, I'm sure. But what would you advise me to do when we reach Newcastle? It will be some time before you get off again."

"Not long. If you like to take your share in getting the cargo on board, you can make wages by that."

"With all my heart," said Thomas, whom this announcement greatly relieved.

"It's dirty work," said the captain.

"There's plenty of water about," answered Thomas.

When they came to Newcastle, Thomas worked as hard as any of them, getting the ballast out and the new cargo in. He had never known what it was to work before; and though it tired him dreadfully at first, it did him good.

Among the men was one whom he liked more than the rest. He had been in the merchant service, and had sailed to India and other places. He knew more than his shipmates, and had only taken to the coasting for a time for family reasons. With him Thomas chiefly consorted when their day's work was over. With a growing hope that by some means he might rise at last into another kind of company, he made the best he could of what he had, knowing well that it was far better than he deserved, and far better than what of late he had been voluntarily choosing. His hope, however, alternated with such fits of misery and despair, that if it had not been for the bodily work he had to do, he thought he would have lost his reason. I believe not a few keep hold of their senses in virtue of doing hard work. I knew an earl's son and heir who did so. And I think that not a few, especially women, lose their senses just from having nothing to do. Many more, who are not in danger of this, lose their health, and more still lose their purity and rectitude. In other words, health—physical, mental, moral, and spiritual

—requires, for its existence and continuance, work, often hard and bodily labor.

This man lived in Newcastle, and got Thomas a decent room near his own dwelling, where he slept. One evening they had been walking together about the place till they were tired. It was growing late, and as they were some distance from home, they went into a little public house which Robins knew to get a bit of bread and cheese and some ale. Robins was a very sober man, and Thomas felt no scruple in accompanying him thus, although one of the best things to be said for Thomas was, that ever since he went on board the *Raven* he had steadily refused to touch spirits. Perhaps, as I have hinted before, there was less merit in this than may appear, for the very smell was associated with such painful memories of misery that it made him shudder. Sometimes a man's physical nature comes in to help him to be good. For such a dislike may grow into a principle which will last after the dislike has vanished.

They sat down in a little room with colored prints of ships in full sail upon the walls, a sanded floor, in the once new fashion which superseded rushes, and an ostrich egg hanging from the ceiling. The landlady was a friend of Robins, and showed them this attention. On the other side of a thin partition was the ordinary room, where the ordinary run of customers sat and drank their grog. There were only two or three in there when our party entered. Presently, while Thomas and Robins were sitting at their supper, they heard two or three more come in. A hearty recognition took place, and fresh orders were given. Thomas started and listened. He thought he heard the name *Ningpo*.

Now, from Thomas's having so suddenly broken off all connection with his friends, he knew nothing of what had been going on with regard to the property Mr. Boxall had left behind him. He thought, of course, that Mrs. Boxall would inherit it. It would not be fair to suppose, however, that this added to his regret at having lost Lucy, for he was humbled enough to be past that. The man who is turned out of Paradise does not grieve over the loss of its tulips, or, if he does, how came he ever to be within its gates? But the very fact that the name of Boxall was painful to him, made the name of that vessel attract and startle him at once.

"What's the matter?" said Robins.

"Didn't you hear some one in the next room mention the *Ningpo*?" returned Thomas.

"Yes. She was a bark in the China trade."

"Lost last summer on the Cape Verdes. I knew the captain—at least, I didn't know him, but I knew his brother and his family. They were all on board and all lost."

"Ah!" said Robins, "that's the way of it, you see. People oughtn't to go to sea but them as has business there. Did you say the crew was lost as well?"

"So the papers said."

Robins rose, and went into the next room. He had a suspicion that he knew the voice. Almost the same moment a rough burst of greeting came to Thomas's ears; and a few minutes after, Robins entered, bringing with him a sailor so rough, so hairy, so brown, that he looked as if he must be proof against any attack of the elements—case-hardened against wind and water.

"Here's the gentleman," said Robins, "as knew your captain, Jack."

"Do, sir?" said Jack, touching an imaginary sou'wester.

"What'll you have?" asked Tom.

This important point settled, they had a talk together, in which Jack opened up more freely in the presence of Robins than he would have felt interest enough to do with a stranger alone who was only a would-be sailor at best—a fact which could not be kept a secret from an eye used to read all sorts of signals. I will not attempt to give the story in Jack's lingo. But the certainty was that he had been on board the *Ningpo* when she went to pieces—that he had got ashore on a spar, after sitting through the night on the stern, and seeing every soul lost, as far as he believed, but himself. He had no great power of description, and did not volunteer much; but he returned very direct answers to all the questions Thomas put to him. Had Thomas only read some of the proceedings in the Court of Probate during the last few months, he would have known better what sort of questions to put to him. Almost the only remark Jack volunteered was—

"Poor little July! how she did stick to me, to be sure! But she was as dead as a marlin-spike long afore the starn broke up."

"Were you long on the island?" asked Tom.

"No, not long," answered the sailor. "I always was one of the lucky ones. I was picked up the same day by a brigantine bound from Portingale to the Sambusy."

Little did Tom think how much might be involved in what Jack said. They parted, and the friends went home together. They made a good voyage, notwithstanding some rough weather, to Dundee, failed in getting a return cargo, and went back to Newcastle in ballast. From Newcastle their next voyage was to London again.

"If you would rather not go to London," said the master to Tom, "there's a friend of mine here who is just ready to start for Aberdeen. I dare say if I were to speak to him he would take you on board."

But Tom's heart was burning to see Lucy once more—if only to see her and restore her ring. If, he thought, he might but once humble himself to the dust before her—if he might but let her see that, worthless as he was, he worshipped her, his heart would be easier. He thought likewise, that what with razoring and tanning, and the change of his clothes, he was not likely to be recognized. And besides, by this time the power must be out of Mr. Stopper's hands; at least Lucy must have come to exert her influence over the affairs of the business, and she would not allow them to drive things to extremity with him, worthless as he was. He would venture, come of it what might. So he told the captain that he would much prefer to work his passage to London again. It was a long passage this time, and very rough weather.

It was with strange feelings that Thomas saw once more the turrets of the Tower of London. Danger—exposure, it might be—lay before him, but he thought only of Lucy, not of the shame now. It was yet early morning when Captain Smith and he went on shore at Shadwell. The captain was going to see an old friend in the neighborhood, and after that to Limehouse, to the Mermaid, to see his sister. Thomas wanted

to be alone, for he had not yet succeeded in making up his mind what he was going to do. So he sent a grateful message by the captain, with the addition that he would look in upon them in the evening.

Left alone, without immediate end or aim, he wandered on, not caring whither he went, but, notwithstanding his heavy thoughts, with something of the enjoyment the sailor feels in getting on shore even after only a fortnight at sea. It was a bright, cold, frosty morning, in the month of March. Without knowing his course, Thomas was wandering northward; and after he had gone into a coffee-shop and had some breakfast, he carelessly resumed his course in the same direction. He found that he was in the Cambridge Road, but whither that led he had no idea. Nor did he know, so absorbed was he in his own thoughts, even after he came into a region he knew, till, lifting up his head, he saw the grey time-worn tower, that looks so strong and is so shaky, of the old church of Haekney, now solitary, its ancient nave and chancel and all having vanished, leaving it to follow at its leisure, wearied out with disgust at the church which has taken its place, and is probably the ugliest building in Christendom, except the parish-church of a certain little town in the north of Aberdeenshire. This sent a strange pang to his heart, for else by that family used to live whose bones were now whitening among those rocky islands of the Atlantic. He went into the church-yard, sat down on a grave-stone, and thought. Now that the fiction of his own worth had vanished like an image in the clouds of yesterday, he was able to see clearly into his past life and conduct; and he could not conceal from himself that his behavior to Mary Boxall might have had something to do with the loss of the whole family. He saw more and more the mischief that had come of his own weakness, lack of courage, and principle. If he could but have defended his own conduct where it was blameless, or at least allowed it to be open to the day-light and the anger of those whom it might not please, he would thus have furnished his own steps with a strong barrier against sliding down that slope down which he had first slid down before falling headlong from the precipice at its foot. In self-abasement he rose from the grave-stone, and walked slowly past the house. Merry faces of children looked from upper windows, who knew nothing of those who had been there before them. Then he went away westward toward Highbury. He would just pass his father's door. There was no fear of his father seeing him at this time of the day, for he would be at his office, and his mother could not leave her room. Ah, his mother! How had he behaved to her? A new torrent of self-reproach rushed over his soul as he walked along the downs toward Islington. Some day, if he could only do something first to distinguish himself in any way, he would go and beg her forgiveness. But what chance was there of his ever doing anything now? He had cut all the ground of action from under his own feet. Not yet did Thomas see that his duty was to confess his sin, waiting for no means of covering its enormity. He walked on. He passed the door, casting but a cursory glance across the windows. There was no one to be seen. He went down the long walk with the lime-trees on one side, which he

knew so well, and just as he reached the gates there were his sister Amy and Mr. Simon coming from the other side. They were talking and laughing merrily, and looking in each other's face. He had never seen Mr. Simon look so pleasant before. He almost felt as if he could speak to him. But no sooner did Mr. Simon see that this sailor-looking fellow was regarding them, than the clerical mask was on his face, and Thomas turned away with involuntary dislike.

"It is clear," he said to himself, "that they don't care much what is become of me." He turned then, westward again, toward Highgate, and then went over to Hampstead, paused at the pines, and looked along the valley beneath; then descended into it, and went across the heath till he came out on the road by Wildwood. This was nearly the way he had wandered on that stormy Christmas Day with Mary Boxall. He had this day, almost without conscious choice, traversed the scenes of his former folly. Had he not been brooding repentantly over his faults, I doubt if he could have done so, even unconsciously. He turned into the Bull and Bush, and had some dinner; then as night was falling, started for London, having made up his mind at last what he would do. At the Bull and Bush he wrote a note to Luey, to the following effect. He did not dare to call her by her name, still less to use any term of endearment.

"I am not worthy to speak or write your name," he said; "but my heart is dying to see you once more. I have likewise to return you your mother's ring, which, though it has comforted me often in my despair, I have no longer any right to retain. But I should just like to tell you that I am working honestly for my bread. I am a sailor now. I am quite clear of all my bad companions, and hope to remain so. Dare I ask you to meet me once—to-morrow night, say, or any night soon, for I am not safe in London? I will tell you for all when I see you. Send me one line by the bearer of this to say where you will meet me. Do not, for the sake of your love to me once, refuse me this. I want to beg your forgiveness, that I may go away less miserable than I am. Then I will go to Australia, or somewhere out of the country, and you will never hear of me more. God bless you."

He cried a good deal over this note. Then came the question how he was to send it. He could, no doubt, find a messenger at the Mermaid, but he was very unwilling to make any line of communication between that part of London and Guild Court—or, more properly, to connect himself, whose story was there known, with Luey's name. He would go to the neighborhood of Guild Court and there look out for a messenger, whom he could then watch.

CHAPTER XLV.

THOMAS IS CAPTURED.

As soon as he had resolved upon this he set out. There was plenty of time. He would walk. Tired as he was beginning to be, motion was his only solace. He walked through Hampstead, and by Haverstock Hill, Tottenham Court Road, and Holborn, to the City. By this time the moon was up. Going by Ludgate Hill, he saw

her shining over St. Paul's right through the spire of St. Martin's, where the little circle of pillars lays it open to the sky and the wind; she seemed to have melted the spire in two. Then he turned off to the left, now looking out for a messenger. In his mind he chose and rejected several, dallying with his own eagerness, and yielding to one doubt after another about each in succession. At last he reached the farther end of Bagot Street. There stood Poppie with her "murphy-buster." Had it been day-light, when her dress and growth would have had due effect upon her appearance, probably Thomas would not have known her; but seeing her face only by the street-lamp, he just recollected that he had seen the girl about Guild Court. He had no suspicion that she would know him. But Poppie was as sharp as a needle; she did know him.

"Do you know Guild Court, my girl?" he asked.

"I believe you," answered Poppie.

"Would you take this letter for me, and give it to Miss Burton, who lives there, and wait for an answer. If she's not at home, bring it back to me. I will take care of your potatoes, and give you a shilling when you come back."

Whether Poppie would have accepted the office if she had not recognized Thomas, I do not know. She might, for she had so often forsaken her machine and found it all right when she returned, that I think the promise of the shilling would have enabled her to run the risk. As it was, she siddled. While she was gone he sold three or four of her potatoes. He knew how to deliver them; but he didn't know the price, and just took what they gave him. He stood trembling with hope.

Suddenly he was seized by the arm from behind, and a gruff voice he thought he knew, said—

"Here he is! Come along, Mr. Worboise. You're wanted."

Thomas had turned in great alarm. There were four men, he saw, but they were not policemen. That was a comfort. Two of them were little men. None of them spoke but the one who seized him. He twisted his arm from the man's grasp, and was just throwing his fist at his head, when he was pinioned by two arms thrown round him from behind.

"Don't strike," said the first man, "or it'll be the worse for you. I'll call the police. Come along, and I swear nothing but good will come of it—to you as well as to other people. I'm not the man to get you into trouble, I can tell you. Don't you know me?—Kitley, the book-seller. Come along. I've been in a fix myself before now."

Thomas yielded, and they led him away.

"But there's that child's potatoes!" he said. "The whole affair will be stolen. Just wait till she comes back."

"Oh! she's all right," said Kitley. "There she is, buttering a ha'p'orth. Come along."

They led him through streets and lanes, every one of which Thomas knew better than his catechism a good deal. All at once they bustled him in at a church door. In the vestibule Thomas saw that there were but two with him—Mr. Kitley, whom he now recognized, and a little man with his hair standing erect over his pale face, like corn on the top of a chalk-cliff.

Him too he recognized, for Mr. Spelt had done many repairs for him. The other two had disappeared. Neither Mr. Salter nor Mr. Dolman cared to tempt Providence by coming farther. It was Jim who had scened his arms, and saved Kitley's head. Mr. Kitley made way for Thomas to enter first. Fearful of any commotion, he yielded still, and went into a pew near the door. The two men followed him. It is time I should account for the whole of this strange proceeding.

Jim Salter did not fail to revisit the Mermaid on the day of Tom's departure, but he was rather late, and Tom was gone. As to what had become of him, Mr. Potts thought it more prudent to profess ignorance. He likewise took another procedure upon him, which, although well-meant, was not honest. Regardless of Thomas's desire that Jim should have a half-sovereign for the trouble of the preceding day, Mr. Potts, weighing the value of Jim's time, and the obligation he was himself under to Tom, resolved to take Tom's interests in his own hands, and therefore very solemnly handed a half-crown and a florin, as what Thomas had left for him, across the counter to Jim. Jim took the amount in severe dudgeon. The odd sixpence was especially obnoxious. It was grievous to his soul.

"Four and sixpence! Four bob and one tanner," said Jim, in a tone of injury, in which there certainly was no pretense—"after a-riskin' of my life, not to mention a-wastin' of my precious time for the ungrateful young snob. Four and sixpence!"

Mr. Potts told him with equal solemnity, a righteous indignation looking over the top of his red nose, to hold his jaw, or go out of his tavern. Whereupon Jim gave a final snuff, and was silent, for where there was so much liquor on the premises it was prudent not to anger the Mermaid's master. Thereupon the said master, probably to ease his own conscience Jim-ward, handed him a glass of old Tom, which Jim, not without suspicion of false play, emptied and deposited. From that day, although he continued to call occasionally at the Mermaid, he lost all interest in his late client, never referred to him, and always talked of Bessy Potts as if he himself had taken her out of the water.

The acquaintance between Dolman and him began about this time to grow a little more intimate, and after the meeting which I have described above, they met pretty frequently, when Mr. Dolman communicated to him such little facts as transpired about "them lawyers," namely, Mr. Worboise's proceedings. Among the rest was the suspicious disappearance of the son, whom Mr. Dolman knew, not to speak to, but by sight, as well as his own lap-stone. Mr. Salter, already suspicious of his man, requested a description of the missing youth, and concluded that it was the same in whom he had been so grievously disappointed, for the odd sixpence represented any conceivable amount of meanness, not to say wickedness. This increased intimacy with Jim did Dolman no good, and although he would not yet forsake his work during work-hours, he would occasionally permit Jim to fetch a jug of beer from a neighboring tavern, and consume it with him in his shop. On these occasions they had to use great circumspection

with regard to Dolly's landlord, who sat over his head. But in the winter nights, Mr. Spelt would put up the outside shutter over his window to keep the cold out, only occasionally opening his door to let a little air in. This made it possible to get the beer introduced below without discovery, when Dolman, snail-like, closed the mouth of his shell also, in which there was barely room for two, and stitched away while Jim did the chief part of the drinking and talking—in an under-tone—for him—not so low, however, but that Spelt could hear not a little that set him thinking. It was pretty clear that young Worboise was afraid to show himself, and this and other points he communicated to his friend Kiteley. This same evening they were together thus when they heard a hurried step come up and stop before the window, and the voice of Mr. Kiteley, well known to Dolman, call to the tailor overhead.

"Spelt, I say. Spelt!"

Mr. Spelt looked out at his door.

"Yes, Mr. Kiteley. What's the matter?"

"Here's that young devil's lamb, Worboise, been and sent a letter to Miss Burton by your Poppie, and he's a-waitin' an answer. Come along, and we'll take him alive."

"But what do you want to do with him?" asked Spelt.

"Take him to Mr. Fuller."

"But what if he won't come?"

"We can threaten him with the police, as if we knew all about it. Come along, there's no time to be lost."

"But what would you take him to Mr. Fuller for?"

My reader may well be inclined to ask the same question. I will explain. Mr. Kiteley was an original man in thinking, and a rarely practical man in following it up, for he had confidence in his own conclusions. Ever since he had made the acquaintance of Mr. Fuller through Mattie's illness, he had been feeling his influence more and more, and was gradually reforming his ways in many little things that no one knew of but himself. No one in London knew him as any thing but an honest man, but I presume there are few men so honest that if they were to set about it seriously, they could not be honest still. I suspect that the most honest man of my acquaintance will be the readiest to acknowledge this; for honesty has wonderful offshoots from its great tap-root. Having this experience in himself, he had faith in the moral power of Mr. Fuller. Again, since Lucy had come to live in the house, he had grown to admire her yet more, and the attention and kindness she continued to show to his princess, caused an equal growth in his gratitude. Hence it became more and more monstrous in his eyes that she should be deprived of her rights in such a villainous manner by the wickedness of "them Worboises." For the elder, he was afraid that he was beyond redemption; but if he could get hold of the younger, and put him under Mr. Fuller's pump, for that was how he represented the possible process of cleansing to himself, something might come of it. He did not know that Thomas was entirely ignorant of his father's relation to the property of the late Richard Boxall, and that no man in London would have less influence with Worboise, senior, than

Worboise, junior. He had had several communications with Mr. Fuller on the subject, and had told him all he knew. Mr. Fuller likewise had made out that this must be the same young man of whom Lucy had spoken in such trouble. But as he had disappeared, nothing could be done—even if he had had the same hope of good results from the interview as Mr. Kiteley, whose simplicity and eagerness amused as well as pleased him. When Mr. Kiteley, therefore, received from Poppie Thomas's letter to give to Lucy, who happened to be out, he sped at once, with his natural promptitude, to secure Mr. Spelt's assistance in carrying out his conspiracy against Thomas.

As soon as the two below heard Mr. Spelt scramble down and depart with Mr. Kiteley, they issued from their station; Mr. Dolman anxious to assist in the capture, Mr. Salter wishing to enjoy his disgrace, for the odd sixpence rankled. As soon as they saw him within the inner door of the church they turned and departed. They knew nothing about churches, and were unwilling to enter. They did not know what they might be in for, if they went in. Neither had they any idea for what object Thomas was taken there. Dolman went away with some vague notion about the Ecclesiastical Court; for he tried to read the papers sometimes. This notion he imparted with equal vagueness to the brain of Jim Salter, already muddled with the beer he had drunk. Dolman went back to his work, hoping to hear about it when Spelt came home. Jim wandered eastward to convey a somewhat incorrect idea of what had happened to the inhabitants of the Mermaid. Having his usual design on the Mermaid's resources, his story lost nothing in the telling, and, in great perplexity, and greater uneasiness, Captain Smith and Mr. Potts started to find out the truth of the matter. Jim conducted them to the church door, which was still open, and retired round the corner.

Meantime the captors and the culprit waited till the service was over. As soon as Mr. Fuller had retired to the vestry, and the congregation had dispersed, Mr. Kiteley intimated to Thomas that he must follow him, and led the way up the church. With the fear of the police still before his eyes, Thomas did follow, and the little tailor brought up the rear. Hardly waiting, in his impatience, to knock at the door, Mr. Kiteley popped his head in as Mr. Fuller was standing in his shirt-sleeves, and said with ill-suppressed triumph—

"Here he is, sir! I've got him!"

"Whom do you mean?" said Mr. Fuller, arrested by surprise with one arm in his coat and the other hand searching for the other sleeve.

"Young Worboise. The lawyer-chap, you know, sir," he added, seeing that the name conveyed no idea.

"Oh!" said Mr. Fuller, prolongedly. "Show him in, then." And on went his coat.

Thomas entered, staring in bewilderment. Nor was Mr. Fuller quite at his ease at first, when the handsome, brown sailor-lad stepped into the vestry. But he shook hands with him, and asked him to take a chair. Thomas obeyed. Seeing his conductors lingered, Mr. Fuller then said—

"You must leave us alone now, Mr. Kately. How do you do, Mr. Spelt?"

They retired, and after a short consultation together in the church, agreed that they had done their part and could do no more, and went home.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE CONFESSION.

As soon as the door closed behind them, Mr. Fuller turned to Tom, saying, as he took a chair near him, "I'm very glad to see you, Mr. Worboise. I have long wanted to have a little talk with you."

"Will you tell me," said Tom, with considerable uneasiness, notwithstanding the pacific appearance of every thing about him, "why those people have made me come to you? I was afraid of making a row in the street, and so I thought it better to give in. But I have not an idea why I am here."

Mr. Fuller thought there must be some farther reason, else a young man of Thomas's appearance would not have so quietly yielded to the will of two men like Kately and Spelt. But he kept this conclusion to himself.

"It certainly was a most unwarrantable proceeding if they used any compulsion. But I have no intention of using any—nor should I have much chance," he added, laughing, "if it came to a tussle with a young fellow like you, Mr. Worboise."

This answer restored Tom to his equanimity a little.

"Perhaps you know my father," he said, finding that Mr. Fuller was silent. In fact, Mr. Fuller was quite puzzled how to proceed. He cared little for the business part, and for the other, he must not compromise Lucy. Clearly the lawyer-business was the only beginning. And this question of Tom's helped him to it.

"I have not the pleasure of knowing your father. I wish I had. But after all, it is better I should have a chat with you first."

"Most willingly," said Tom, with courtesy.

"It is a very unconventional thing I am about to do. But very likely you will give me such information as may enable me to set the minds of some of my friends at rest. I am perfectly aware what a lame introduction this is, and I must make a foolish figure indeed, except you will kindly understand that sometimes a clergyman is compelled to meddle with matters which he would gladly leave alone."

"I have too much need of forbearance myself not to grant it, sir—although I do not believe any will be necessary in your case. Pray make me understand you."

Mr. Fuller was greatly pleased with this answer, and proceeded to business at once.

"I am told by a man who is greatly interested in one of the parties concerned, that a certain near relative of yours is in possession of a large property which ought by right, if not by law, to belong to an old lady who is otherwise destitute. I wish to employ your mediation to procure a settlement upon her of such small portion of the property at least as will make her independent. I am certainly explicit enough now," concluded Mr. Fuller, with a consider-
 able

feeling of relief in having discharged himself, if not of his duty, yet of so creditable a beginning of it.

"I am as much in the dark as ever, sir," returned Thomas. "I know nothing of what you refer to. If you mean my father, I am the last one to know any thing of his affairs. I have not seen him or heard of him for months."

"But you can not surely be ignorant of the case. It has been reported in the public prints from time to time. It seems that your father has come in for the contingent reversion—I think that is the phrase, I'm not sure—of all the property of the late Richard Boxall—"

"By Jove!" cried Thomas, starting to his feet in a rage, then sinking back on his chair in conscious helplessness. "He did make his will," he muttered.

"Leaving," Mr. Fuller went on, "the testator's mother and his niece utterly unprovided for."

"But she had money of her own in the business. I have heard her say so a thousand times."

"She has nothing now."

"My father is a villain!" cried Thomas, starting once more to his feet, and pacing up and down in the little vestry like a wild beast in a cage. "And what am I?" he added, after a pause. "I have brought all this upon her." He could say no more. He sat down, hid his face in his hands, and sobbed.

Thomas was so far mistaken in this, that his father, after things had gone so far as they had, would have done as he had done, whatever had been Thomas's relations to the lady. But certainly, if he had behaved as he ought, things could not have gone thus far. He was the cause of all the trouble.

Nothing could have been more to Mr. Fuller's mind.

"As to Miss Burton," he said, "I happen to know that she has another grief, much too great to allow her to think about money. A clergyman, you know, comes to hear of many things. She never told me who he was," said Mr. Fuller, with hesitation; "but she confessed to me that she was in great trouble."

"Oh, sir, what *shall* I do?" cried Thomas, "I love her with all my heart, but I can never, never dare to think of her more. I came up to London at the risk of—of— I came up to London only to see her and give her back this ring, and beg her to forgive me, and go away forever. And now I have not only given her pain—"

"Pain!" said Mr. Fuller. "If she weren't so good, her heart would have broken before now."

Thomas burst out sobbing again. He turned his face away from Mr. Fuller and stood by the wall, shaken with misery. Mr. Fuller left him alone for a minute or two. Then going up to him, he put his hand on his shoulder kindly and said—

"My dear boy, I suspect you have got into some terrible scrape, or you would not have disappeared as they tell me. And your behavior seems to confirm the suspicion. Tell me all about it, and I have very little doubt that I can help you out of it. But you must tell me *every thing*."

"I will, sir; I will," Tom sobbed.

"Mind, no half-confessions. I have no right

to ask you to confess but on the ground of helping you. But if I am to help you, I must know all. Can I trust you that you will be quite straightforward and make a clean breast of it?"

Tom turned round, and looked Mr. Fuller calmly in the face. The light of hope shone in his eyes: the very offer of hearing all his sin and misery gave him hope. To tell it, would be to get rid of some of the wretchedness.

"I hate myself so, sir," he said, "that I do not feel it worth while to hide any thing. I will speak the truth. When you wish to know more than I tell, ask me any questions you please, and I will answer them."

At this moment a tap was heard at the vestry door, and it opened, revealing two strange figures with seared interrogating faces on the top—the burly form of Captain Smith, and the almost as bulky, though differently arranged, form of Mr. Potts.

"Don't be too hard on the young gentleman, sir," said Mr. Potts, in the soothing tone of one who would patch up a family quarrel. "He won't do it again, I'll go bail. You don't know, sir, what a good sort he is. Don't get him into no trouble. He lost his life—all but—a reskewing of my Bessie. He did now. True as the Bible, sir," added Mr. Potts, with conciliatory flattery to the clergyman's profession, whom they both took for the father or uncle of Thomas.

"You just let me take him off again, sir," put in Captain Smith, while the face of Mr. Potts, having recovered its usual complexion, looked on approvingly like a comic but benevolent moon.

Mr. Fuller had a wise way of never interrupting till he saw in what direction the sense lay. So he let them talk, and the seaman went on.

"Every body knows the sea's the place for curing the likes o' them fine fellows that carries too much sail ashore. They soon learns their reef-points there. Why, parson, sir, he's been but three or four voyages, and I'll take him for an able-bodied seaman to-morrow. He's a right good sort, though he may ha' been a little frolicsome on shore. We was all young once, sir."

"Are these men friends of yours, Mr. Worboise?" asked Mr. Fuller.

"Indeed they are," answered Thomas. "I think I must have killed myself before now, if it hadn't been for those two."

So saying he shook hands with Mr. Potts, and, turning to the captain, said—

"Thank you, thank you, captain, but I am quite safe with this gentleman. I will come and see you to-morrow."

"He shall sleep at my house to-night," said Mr. Fuller; "and no harm shall happen to him, I promise you."

"Thank you, sir;" and "Good-night, gentlemen," said both, and went through the silent wide church with a kind of awe that rarely visited either of them.

Without farther preface than just the words, "Now, I will tell you all about it, sir," Thomas began his story. When he had finished it, having answered the few questions he put to him in its course, Mr. Fuller was satisfied that he did know all about it, and that if ever there was a case in which he ought to give all the help he could, here was one. He did not utter a word of reproof. Thomas's condition of mind was such that it was not only unnecessary, but might have done harm.

He had now only to be met with the same simplicity which he had himself shown. The help must match the confession.

"Well, we must get you out of this scrape, somehow," he said, heartily.

"I don't see how you can, sir."

"It rests with yourself chiefly. Another can only help. The feet that walked into the mire must turn and walk out of it again. I don't mean to reproach you—only to encourage you to effort."

"What effort?" said Tom. "I have scarcely heart for any thing. I have disgraced myself forever. Suppose all the consequences of my—doing as I did—he could not yet call the deed by its name—"were to disappear, I have a blot upon me to all eternity, that nothing can wash out. For there is the fact. I almost think it is not worth while to do any thing."

"You are altogether wrong about that," returned Mr. Fuller. "It is true that the deed is done, and that that can not be obliterated. But a living soul may outgrow all stain and all reproach—I do not mean in the judgment of men merely, but in the judgment of God, which is always founded on the actual fact, and always calls things by their right names, and covers no man's sin, although he forgives it and takes it away. A man may abjure his sin so, cast it away from him so utterly, with pure heart and full intent, that, although he did it, it is his no longer. But, Thomas Worboise, if the stain of it were to cleave to you to all eternity, that would be infinitely better than that you should have continued capable of doing the thing. You are more honorable now than you were before. Then you were capable of the crime; now, I trust, you are not. It was far better that, seeing your character was such that you could do it, you should thus be humbled by disgracing yourself, than that you should have gone on holding up a proud head in the world, with such a deceitful show of weakness in your heart. It is the kindest thing God can do for his children, sometimes, to let them fall in the mire. You would not hold by your Father's hand; you struggled to pull it away; he let it go, and there you lay. Now that you stretch forth the hand to him again, he will take you, and clean, not your garments only, but your heart, and soul, and consciousness. Pray to your Father, my boy. He will change your humiliation into humility, your shame into purity."

"Oh, if he were called any thing else than *Father*! I am afraid I hate my father."

"I don't wonder. But that is your own fault, too."

"How is that, sir? Surely you are making even me out worse than I am."

"No. You are afraid of him. As soon as you have ceased to be afraid of him, you will no longer be in danger of hating him."

"I can't help being afraid of him."

"You must break the bonds of that slavery. No slave can be God's servant. His servants are all free men. But we will come to that presently. You must not try to call God your Father, till *father* means something very different to you from what it seems to mean now. Think of the grandest human being you can imagine—the tenderest, the most gracious, whose severity is boundless, but hurts himself most—all

against evil, all for the evil-doer. God is all that, and infinitely more. You need not call him by any name till the name bursts from your heart. God our Saviour means all the names in the world, and infinitely more! One thing I can assure you of, that even I, if you will but do your duty in regard to this thing, will not only love—yes, I will say that word—will not only love, but honor you far more than if I had known you only as a respectable youth. It is harder to turn back than to keep at home. I doubt if there could be such joy in heaven over the repenting sinner if he was never to be free of his disgrace. But I like you the better for having the feeling of eternal disgrace now."

"I will think God is like you, sir. Tell me what I am to do."

"I am going to set you the hardest of tasks, one after the other. They will be like the pinch of death. But they *must* be done. And after that—peace. Who is at the head of the late Mr. Boxall's business now?"

"I suppose Mr. Stopper. He was head-clerk."

"You must go to him and take him the money you stole."

Thomas turned ashy pale.

"I haven't got it, sir."

"How much was it, did you say?"

"Eleven pounds—nearly twelve."

"I will find you the money. I will lend it to you."

"Thank you, thank you, sir. I will not spend a penny I can help till I repay you. But—"

"Yes, now come the *buts*," said Mr. Fuller, with a smile of kindness. "What is the first *but*?"

"Stopper is a hard man, and never liked me. He will give me up to the law."

"I can't help it. It must be done. But I do not believe he will do that. I will help you so far as to promise you to do all that lies in my power in every way to prevent it. And there is your father: his word will be law with him now."

"So much the worse, sir. He is ten times as hard as Stopper."

"He will not be willing to disgrace his own family, though."

"I know what he will do. He will make it a condition that I shall give up Lucy. But I will go to prison before I will do that. Not that it will make any difference in the end, for Lucy won't have a word to say to me now. She bore all that woman could bear. But she shall give me up—she has given me up, of course; but I will never give her up that way."

"That's right, my boy. Well, what do you say to it?"

Tom was struggling with himself. With a sudden resolve, the source of which he could not tell, he said, "I will, sir." With a new light in his face he added, "What next?"

"Then you must go to your father."

"That is far worse. I am afraid I can't."

"You must—if you should not find a word to say when you go—if you should fall in a faint on the floor when you try."

"I will, sir. Am I to tell him every thing?"

"I am not prepared to say that. If he had been a true father to you, I should have said 'Of course.' But there is no denying the fact that

such he has not been, or rather, that such he is not. The point lies there. I think that alters the affair. It is one thing to confess to God and another to the devil. Excuse me, I only put the extremes."

"What ought I to tell him then?"

"I think you will know that best when you see him. We can not tell how much he knows."

"Yes," said Thomas, thoughtfully; "I will tell him that I am sorry I went away as I did, and ask him to forgive me. Will that do?"

"I must leave all that to your own conscience, heart, and honesty. Of course, if he receives you at all, you must try what you can do for Mrs. Boxall."

"Alas! I know too well how useless that will be. It will only enrage him the more at them. He may offer to put it all right, though, if I promise to give Lucy up. *Must* I do that, sir?"

Knowing more about Lucy's feelings than Thomas, Mr. Fuller answered at once—though if he had hesitated, he might have discovered ground for hesitating—

"On no account whatever."

"And what must I do next?" he asked, more cheerfully.

"There's your mother."

"Ah! you needn't remind me of her."

"Then you must not forget Miss Burton. You have some apology to make to her too, I suppose."

"I had just sent her a note, asking her to meet me once more, and was waiting for her answer, when the book-seller laid hold of me. I was so afraid of making a row, lest the police should come, that I gave in to him. I owe him more than ever I can repay."

"You will when you have done all you have undertaken."

"But how am I to see Lucy now? She will not know where I am. But perhaps she will not want to see me."

Here Tom looked very miserable again. Anxious to give him courage, Mr. Fuller said—

"Come home with me now. In the morning, after you have seen Mr. Stopper, and your father and mother, come back to my house. I am sure she will see you."

With more thanks in his heart than on his tongue, Tom followed Mr. Fuller from the church. When they stepped into the street, they found the book-seller, the seaman, and the publican, talking together on the pavement.

"It's all right," said Mr. Fuller, as he passed them. "Good-night." Then, turning again to Mr. Kitley, he added in a low voice, "He knows nothing of his father's behavior, Kitley. You'll be glad to hear that."

"I ought to be glad to hear it for his own sake, I suppose," returned the book-seller. "But I don't know as I am, for all that."

"Have patience, have patience," said the parson, and walked on, taking Thomas by the arm.

For the rest of the evening Mr. Fuller avoided much talk with the penitent, and sent him to bed early.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THOMAS AND MR. STOPPER.

THOMAS did not sleep much that night, and was up betimes in the morning. Mr. Fuller had risen before him, however, and when Thomas went down stairs, after an invigorating cold bath which his host had taken special care should be provided for him, along with clean linen, he found him in his study reading. He received him very heartily, looking him, with some anxiety, in the face, as if to see whether he could read action there. Apparently he was encouraged, for his own face brightened up, and they were soon talking together earnestly. But knowing Mr. Stopper's habit of being first at the counting-house, Thomas was anxious about the time, and Mr. Fuller hastened breakfast. That and prayers over, he put twelve pounds into Thomas's hand, which he had been out that morning already to borrow from a friend. Then, with a quaking heart, but determined will, Thomas set out and walked straight to Bagot Street. Finding no one there but the man sweeping out the place, he went a little farther, and there was the book-seller arranging his stall outside the window. Mr. Kitley regarded him with doubtful eyes, vouchsafing him a "good-morning" of the gruffest.

"Mr. Kitley," said Thomas, "I am more obliged to you than I can tell, for what you did last night."

"Perhaps you ought to be; but it wasn't for your sake, Mr. Worboise, that I did it."

"I am quite aware of that. Still, if you will allow me to say so, I am as much obliged to you as if it had been."

Mr. Kitley grumbled something, for he was not prepared to be friendly.

"Will you let me wait in your shop till Mr. Stopper comes?"

"There he is."

Thomas's heart beat fast, but he delayed only to give Mr. Stopper time to enter the more retired part of the counting-house. Then he hurried to the door and went in.

Mr. Stopper was standing with his back to the glass partition, and took the entrance for that of one of his clerks. Thomas tapped at the glass door, but not till he had opened it and said "Mr. Stopper," did he take any notice. He started then, and turned; but, having regarded him for a moment, gave a rather constrained smile, and, to his surprise, held out his hand.

"It is very good of you to speak to me at all, Mr. Stopper," said Thomas, touched with gratitude already. "I don't deserve it."

"Well, I must say you behaved rather strangely, to say the least of it. It might have been a serious thing for you, Mr. Thomas, if I hadn't been more friendly than you would have given me credit for. Look here."

And he showed him the sum of eleven pounds thirteen shillings and eightpence halfpenny put down to Mr. Stopper's debit in the petty cash-book.

"You understand that, I presume, Mr. Thomas. You ran the risk of transportation there."

"I know I did, Mr. Stopper. But just listen to me a moment, and you will be able to forgive me, I think. I had been drinking, and gambling, and losing all night; and I believe I was really

drunk when I did that. Not that I didn't know I was doing wrong. I can't say that. And I know it doesn't clear me at all, but I want to tell you the truth of it. I've been wretched ever since, and daren't show myself. I have been bitterly punished. I haven't touched cards or dice since. Here's the money," he concluded, offering the notes and gold.

Mr. Stopper did not heed the action at first. He was regarding Thomas rather curiously. Thomas perceived it.

"Yes," Thomas said, "I am a sailor. It's an honest way of living, and I like it."

"But you'll come back now, won't you?"

"That depends," answered Thomas. "Would you take me, now, Mr. Stopper?" he added, with a feeble experimental smile. "But there's the money. Do take it out of my hands."

"It lies with your father now, Mr. Thomas. Have you been to Highbury? Of course, I took care not to let him know."

"Thank you heartily. I'm just going there. Do take the horrid money, and let me feel as if I weren't a thief after all."

"As for the money, eleven pound, odd," said Mr. Stopper, without looking at it, "that's neither here nor there. It was a burglary, there can be no doubt, under the circumstances. But I owe you a quarter's salary, though I should not be bound to pay it, seeing you left as you did. Still, I want to be friendly, and you worked very fairly for it. I will hand you over the difference."

"No, never mind that. I don't care about the money. It was all that damned play," said Thomas.

"Don't swear, Mr. Thomas," returned Stopper, taking out the check-book, and proceeding to write a check for thirteen pounds six shillings and fourpence.

"If you had suffered as much from it as I have, Mr. Stopper, you would see no harm in damning it."

Mr. Stopper made no reply, but handed him the check, with the words—

"Now we're clear, Mr. Thomas. But don't do it again. It won't pass twice. I've saved you this time."

"Do it again!" cried Thomas, seizing Mr. Stopper's hand; "I would sooner cut my own throat. Thank you, thank you a thousand times, Mr. Stopper," he added, his heart brimful at this beginning of his day of horror.

Mr. Stopper very coolly withdrew his hand, turned round on his stool, replaced his check-book in the drawer, and proceeded to arrange his writing materials, as if nobody were there but himself. He knew well enough that it was not for Thomas's sake that he had done it; but he had no particular objection to take the credit of it. There was something rudely imposing in the way in which he behaved to Thomas, and Thomas felt it, and did not resent it; for he had no right to be indignant: he was glad of any terms he could make. Let us hope that Mr. Stopper had a glimmering of how it might feel to have been kind, and that he was a little more ready in consequence to do a friendly deed in time to come, even when he could reap no benefit from it. Though Mr. Stopper's assumption of faithful friendship could only do him harm, yet perhaps Thomas's ready acknowledgment of it might do

him good; for not unfrequently to behave to a man as good rouses his conscience and makes him wish that he were as good as he is taken for. It gives him almost a taste of what goodness is like—certainly a very faint and far-off taste—yet a something.

Thomas left the counting-house a free man. He bounded back to Mr. Fuller, returned the money, showed him the check, and told him all.

"There's a beginning for you, my boy!" said Mr. Fuller, as delighted almost as Thomas himself. "Now for the next."

There came the rub. Thomas's countenance fell. He was afraid, and Mr. Fuller saw it.

"You daren't go near Lucy till you have been to your father. It would be to insult her, Thomas."

Tom caught up his cap from the table and left the house, once more resolved. It would be useless to go to Ilighbury at this hour: he would find his father at his office in the city. And he had not far to go to find him—unfortunately, thought Tom.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THOMAS AND HIS FATHER.

WHEN he was shown into his father's room he was writing a letter. Looking up and seeing Tom he gave a grin—that is, a laugh without the smile in it—handed him a few of his fingers, pointed to a chair, and went on with his letter. This reception irritated Tom, and perhaps so far did him good that it took off the edge of his sheepishness—or rather, I should have said, put an edge upon it. Before his father he did not feel that he appeared exactly as a culprit. He had told him either to give up Lucy, or not to show his face at home again. He had lost Lucy, it might be—though hope had revived greatly since his interview with Mr. Stopper; but, in any case, even if she refused to see him, he would not give her up. So he sat, more composed than he had expected to be, waiting for what should follow. In a few minutes his father looked up again, as he methodically folded his letter, and casting a sneering glance at his son's garb, said—

"What's the meaning of this masquerading, Tom?"

"It means that I'm dressed like my work," answered Tom, surprised at his own coolness, now that the ice was broken.

"What's your work then, pray?"

"I'm a sailor."

"You a sailor! A horse-marine, I suppose! Ha, ha!"

"I've made five coasting voyages since you turned me out," said Tom.

"I turned you out! You turned yourself out. Why the devil did you come back, then? Why don't you stick to your new trade?"

"You told me either to give up Lucy Burton, or take lodgings in Wapping. I won't give up Lucy Burton."

"Take her to hell, if you like. What do you come back here for, with your cursed impudence? There's nobody I want less."

This was far from true. He had been very

uneasy about his son. Yet now that he saw him—a prey to the vile demon that ever stirred up his avarice till the disease, which was as the rust spoken of by the prophet St. James, was eating his flesh as it were fire—his tyrannical disposition, maddened by the resistance of his son, and the consequent frustration of his money-making plans, broke out in this fierce, cold, blasting wrath.

"I come here," said Thomas—and he said it merely to discharge himself of a duty, for he had not the thinnest shadow of a hope that it would be of service—"I come here to protest against the extreme to which you are driving your legal rights—which I have only just learned—against Mrs. Boxall."

"And her daughter. But I am not aware that I am driving my rights, as you emphasize the word," said Mr. Worboise, relapsing into his former manner, so cold that it stung; "for I believe I have driven them already almost as far as my knowledge of affairs allows me to consider prudent. I have turned those people out of the house."

"You have!" cried Thomas, starting to his feet. "Father! father! you are worse than even I thought you. It is cruel. It is wicked."

"Don't discompose yourself about it. It is all your own fault, my son."

"I am no son of yours. From this moment I renounce you, and call you *father* no more," cried Thomas, in mingled wrath and horror and consternation at the atrocity of his father's conduct.

"By what name, then, will you be pleased to be known in future, that I may say when I hear it that you are none of mine?"

"Oh, the devil!" burst out Tom, beside himself with his father's behavior and treatment.

"Very well. Then I beg again to inform you, Mr. Devil, that it is your own fault. Give up that girl, and I will provide for the lovely syren and her harridan of a grandam for life; and take you home to wealth and a career which you shall choose for yourself."

"No, father. I will not."

"Then take yourself off, and be —" It is needless to print the close of the sentence.

Thomas rose and left the room. As he went down the stairs, his father shouted after him, in a tone of fury—

"You're not to go near your mother, mind."

"I'm going straight to her," answered Tom, as quietly as he could.

"If you do I'll murder her."

Tom came up the stairs again to the door next his father's where the clerks sat. He opened this and said aloud—

"Gentlemen, you hear what my father has just said. There may be occasion to refer to it again." Then returning to his father's door, he said in a low tone which only he could hear, "My mother may die any moment, as you very well know, sir. It may be awkward after what has just passed."

Having said this, he left his father a little abashed. As his wrath ebbed, he began to admire his son's presence of mind, and even to take some credit for it: "A chip of the old block!" he muttered to himself. "Who would have thought there was so much in the rascal? Sea-faring must agree with the young beggar!"

Thomas hailed the first hansom, jumped in, and drove straight to Highbury. Was it strange that notwithstanding the dreadful interview he had just had—*notwithstanding*, too, that he feared he had not behaved properly to his father, for his conscience had already begun to speak about comparatively little things having been at last hearkened to in regard to great things—that notwithstanding this, he should feel such a gladness in his being as he had never known before? The second and more awful load of duty was now lifted from his mind. True, if he had loved his father much, as it was simply impossible that he should, that load would have been replaced by another—misery about his father's wretched condition and the loss of his love. But although something of this would come later, the thought of it did not intrude now to destroy any of the enjoyment of the glad reaction from months—he would have said years—*yea*, a whole past life of misery—for the whole of his past life had been such a poor thing, that it seemed now as if the misery of the last few months had been only the misery of all his life coming to a head. And this indeed was truer than his judgment would yet have allowed: it was absolute fact, although he attributed it to an overwrought fancy.

CHAPTER XLIX.

THOMAS AND HIS MOTHER.

WHEN the maid opened the door to him she stared like an idiot, yet she was in truth a woman of sense; for before Thomas had reached the foot of the stairs she ran after him saying—

“Mr. Thomas! Mr. Thomas! you mustn't go up to mis'ess all of a sudden. You'll kill her if you do.”

Thomas paused at once.

“Run up and tell her then. Make haste.”

She sped up the stairs, and Thomas followed, waiting outside his mother's door. He had to wait a little while, for the maid was imparting the news with circumspection. He heard the low tone of his mother's voice, but could not hear what she said. At last came a little cry, and then he could hear her sob. A minute or two more passed, which seemed endless to Thomas, and then the maid came to the door, and asked him to go in. He obeyed.

His mother lay in bed, propped up as she used to be on the sofa. She looked much worse than before. She stretched out her arms to him, kissed him, and held his head to her bosom. He had never before had such an embrace from her.

“My boy! my boy!” she cried, weeping. “Thank God! I have you again. You'll tell me all about it, won't you?”

She went on weeping and murmuring words of endearment and gratitude for some time. Then she released him, holding one of his hands only.

“There's a chair there. Sit down and tell me about it. I am afraid your poor father has been hard upon you.”

“We won't talk about my father,” said Thomas. “I have faults enough of my own to con-

cess, mother. But I won't tell you all about them now. I have been very wicked—gambling and worse; but I will never do so any more. I am ashamed and sorry; and I think God will forgive me. Will you forgive me, mother?”

“With all my heart, my boy. And you know that God forgives every one that believes in Jesus. I hope you have given your heart to him, at last. Then I shall die happy.”

“I don't know, mother, whether I have or not; but I want to do what's right.”

“That won't save you, my poor child. You'll have a talk with Mr. Simon about it, won't you? I'm not able to argue any thing now.”

It would have been easiest for Thomas to say nothing, and leave his mother to hope, at least; but he had begun to be honest, therefore he would not deceive her. But in his new anxiety to be honest, he was in great danger of speaking roughly, if not rudely. Those who find it difficult to oppose are in more danger than others of falling into that error when they make opposition a point of conscience. The unpleasantness of the duty irritates them.

“Mother, I will listen to any thing you choose to say; but I won't see that—” *fool* he was going to say, but he changed the epithet—“I won't talk about such things to a man for whom I have no respect.”

Mrs. Worboise gave a sigh; but, perhaps partly because her own respect for Mr. Simon had been a little shaken of late, she said nothing more. Thomas resumed.

“If I hadn't been taken by the hand by a very different man from him, mother, I shouldn't have been here to-day. Thank God! Mr. Fuller is something like a clergyman!”

“Who is he, Thomas? I think I have heard the name.”

“He is the clergyman of St. Amos's in the city.”

“Ah! I thought so. A Ritualist, I am afraid, Thomas. They lay snares for young people.”

“Nonsense, mother!” said Thomas irreverently. “I don't know what you mean. Mr. Fuller, I think, would not feel flattered to be told that he belonged to any party whatever but that of Jesus Christ himself. But I should say, if he belonged to any, it would be the Broad Church.”

“I don't know which is worse. The one believes all the lying idolatry of the Papists; the other believes nothing at all. I'm sadly afraid, Thomas, you've been reading Bishop Colenso.”

Mrs. Worboise believed, of course, in no distinctions but those she saw; and if she had heard the best men of the Broad Church party repudiate Bishop Colenso, she would only have set it down to Jesuitism.

“A sailor hasn't much time for reading, mother.”

“A sailor, Thomas! What do you mean? Where have you been all this time?” she asked, examining his appearance anxiously.

“At sea, mother.”

“My boy! my boy! that is a godless calling. However—”

Thomas interrupted her.

“They that go down to the sea in ships, were supposed once to see the wonders of the Lord, mother.”

"Yes. But when will you be reasonable? That was in David's time."

"The sea is much the same, and man's heart is much the same. Anyhow, I'm a sailor, and a sailor I must be. I have nothing else to do."

"Mr. Boxall's business is all your father's now, I hear; though I'm sure I can not understand it. Whatever you've done, you can go back to the counting-house, you know."

"I can't, mother. My father and I have parted forever."

"Tom!"

"It's true, mother."

"Why is that? What have you been doing?"

"Refusing to give up Lucy Burton."

"Oh, Tom, Tom! Why do you set yourself against your father?"

"Well, mother, I don't want to be impertinent; but it seems to me it's no more than you have been doing all your life."

"For conscience's sake, Tom. But in matters indifferent we ought to yield, you know."

"Is it an indifferent matter to keep one's engagements, mother? To be true to one's word?"

"But you had no right to make them."

"They are made, anyhow, and I must bear the consequences of keeping them."

Mrs. Worboise, poor woman, was nearly worn out. Tom saw it, and rose to go.

"Am I never to see you again, Tom?" she asked despairingly.

"Every time I come to London—so long as my father doesn't make you shut the door against me, mother."

"That shall never be, my boy. And you really are going on that sea again?"

"Yes, mother. It's an honest calling. And believe me, mother, it's often easier to pray to God on shipboard than it is sitting at a desk."

"Well, well, my boy!" said his mother, with a great sigh of weariness. "If I only knew that you were possessed of saving faith, I could bear even to hear that you had been drowned. It may happen any day, you know, Thomas."

"Not till God please. I shan't be drowned before that."

"God has given no pledge to protect any but those that put faith in the merits of his Son."

"Mother, mother, I can't tell a bit what you mean."

"The way of salvation is so plain that he that runneth may read."

"So you say, mother; but I don't see it so. Now I'll tell you what: I want to be good."

"My dear boy!"

"And I pray, and will pray to God to teach me whatever he wants me to learn. So if your way is the right one, God will teach me that. Will that satisfy you, mother?"

"My dear, it is of no use mincing matters. God has told us plainly in his holy Word that he that puts his trust in the merits of Christ shall be saved; and he that does not shall be sent to the place of misery for ever and ever."

The good woman believed that she was giving a true representation of the words of Scripture when she said so, and that they were an end of all controversy.

"But, mother, what if a man can't believe?"

"Then he must take the consequences. There's no provision made for that in the Word."

"But if he wants to believe, mother?" said Tom, in a small agony at his mother's hardness.

"There's no man that can't believe, if he's only willing. I used to think otherwise. But Mr. Simon thinks so, and he has brought me to see that he is right."

"Well, mother, I'm glad Mr. Simon is not at the head of the universe, for then it would be a paltry affair. But it ill becomes me to make remarks upon any body. Mr. Simon hasn't disgraced himself like me, after all, though I'm pretty sure if I had had such teaching as Mr. Fuller's instead of his, I should never have fallen as I have done."

Thomas said this with some bitterness as he rose to take his leave. He had no right to say so. Men as good as he, with teaching as good as Mr. Fuller's, have yet fallen. He forgot that he had had the schooling of sin and misery to prepare the soil of his heart before Mr. Fuller's words were sown in it. Even Mr. Simon could have done a little for him in that condition, if he had only been capable of showing him a little pure human sympathy.

His mother gave him another tearful embrace. Thomas's heart was miserable at leaving her thus fearful, almost hopeless about him. How terrible it would be for her in the windy nights, when she could not sleep, to think that if he went to the bottom, it must be to go deeper still! He searched his mind eagerly for something that might comfort her. It flashed upon him at last.

"Mother, dear," he said, "Jesus said, 'Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.' I will go to him. I will promise you that if you like. That is all I can say, and I think that ought to be enough. If he gives me rest, shall I not be safe? And whoever says that he will not if I go to him—"

"In the appointed way, my dear."

"He says nothing more than *go to him*. I say I will go to him, the only way that a man can, when he is in heaven and I am on the earth. And if Mr. Simon or any body says that he will not give me rest, he is a liar. If that doesn't satisfy you, mother, I don't believe you have any faith in him yourself."

With this outburst, Thomas again kissed his mother, and then left the room. Nor did his last words displease her. I do not by any means set him up as a pattern of filial respect even toward his mother; nor can I approve altogether of the form his confession of faith took, for there was in it a mixture of that graceless material—the wrath of man; but it was good notwithstanding; and such a blunt utterance was far more calculated to carry some hope into his mother's mind than any amount of arguing upon the points of difference between them.

As he reached the landing, his sister Amy came rushing up the stairs from the dining-room, with her hair in disorder, and a blushing face.

"Why, Tom!" she said, starting back.

Tom took her in his arms.

"How handsome you have grown, Tom!" said Amy; and breaking from him, ran up to her mother's room.

Passing the dining-room door, Tom saw Mr. Simon looking into the fire. The fact was he had just made Amy an offer of marriage. Tom

let him stand and hurried back on foot to his friend, his heart full, and his thoughts in confusion.

He found him in his study, where he had made a point of staying all day that Tom might find him at any moment when he might want him. He rose eagerly to meet him.

"Now see I by thine eyes that this is done," he said, quoting King Arthur.

They sat down, and Tom told him all.

"I wish you had managed a little better with your father," he said.

"I wish I had, sir. But it is done, and there is no help for it now."

"No; I suppose not—at present, at least."

"As far as Lucy is concerned, it would have made no difference, if you had been in my place—I am confident of that."

"I dare say you are right. But you have earned your dinner any how; and here comes my housekeeper to say it is ready. Come along."

Thomas's face fell.

"I thought I should have gone to see Lucy now, sir."

"I believe she will not be at home."

"She was always home from Mrs. Morgenstern's before now."

"Yes. But she has to work much harder now. You see her grandmother is dependent on her now."

"And where are they? My father told me himself he had turned them out of the house in Guild Court."

"Yes. But they are no farther off for that; they have lodgings at Mr. Kitley's. I think you had better go and see your friends the sailor and publican after dinner, and by the time you come back, I shall have arranged for your seeing her. You would hardly like to take your chance, and find her with her grandmother and Mattie."

"Who is Mattie? Oh! I know—that dreadful little imp of Kitley's."

"I dare say she can make herself unpleasant enough," said Mr. Fuller, laughing; "but she is a most remarkable and very interesting child. I could hardly have believed in such a child if I had not known her. She was in great danger, I allow, of turning out a little prig, if that word can be used of the feminine gender, but your friend Lucy has saved her from that."

"God bless her," said Thomas fervently. "She has saved me too, even if she refuses to have any thing more to do with me. How shall I tell her every thing? Since I have had it over with my father and Stopper, I feel as if I were white-washed, and to have to tell her what a sepulchre I am is dreadful—and she so white outside and in!"

"Yes, it's hard to do, my boy, but it must be done."

"I would do it—I would insist upon it, even if she begged me not, Mr. Fuller. If she were to say that she would love me all the same, and I needn't say a word about the past, for it was all over now, I would yet beg her to endure the ugly story for my sake, that I might hear my final absolution from her lips."

"That's right," said Mr. Fuller.

They were now seated at dinner, and nothing more of importance to our history was said until that was over. Then they returned to the study,

and, as soon as he had closed the door, Mr. Fuller said—

"But now, Worboise, it is time that I should talk to you a little more about yourself. There is only One that can absolve you in the grand sense of the word. If God himself were to say to you, 'Let by-gones be by-gones, nothing more shall be said about them'—if he only said that, it would be a poor thing to meet our human need. But he is infinitely kinder than that. He says, 'I, even I am he that taketh away thy iniquities.' He alone can make us clean—put our heart so right that nothing of this kind will happen again—make us simple God-loving, man-loving creatures, as much afraid of harboring an unjust thought of our neighbors as of stealing that which is his; as much afraid of pride and self-confidence as of saying with the fool, 'There is no God;' as far from distrusting God for the morrow, as from committing suicide. We can not serve God and Mammon. Hence the constant struggle and discomfort in the minds of even good men. They would, without knowing what they are doing, combine a little Mammon-worship with the service of the God they love. But that can not be. The Spirit of God will ever and always be at strife with Mammon, and in proportion as that spirit is victorious, is peace growing in the man. You must give yourself up to the obedience of his Son entirely and utterly, leaving your salvation to him, troubling yourself nothing about that, but ever seeking to see things as he sees them, and to do things as he would have them done. And for this purpose you must study your New Testament in particular, that you may see the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus; that receiving him as your master, your teacher, your saviour, you may open your heart to the entrance of his spirit, the mind that was in him, that so he may save you. Every word of his, if you will but try to obey it, you will find precious beyond words to say. And he has promised without reserve the Holy Spirit of God to them that ask it. The only salvation is in being filled with the Spirit of God, the mind of Christ."

"I believe you, sir, though I can not quite see into all you say. All I can say is, that I want to be good henceforth. Pray for me, sir, if you think there is any good in one man praying for another."

"I do, indeed—just in proportion to the love that is in it. I can not exactly tell how this should be; but if we believe that the figure St. Paul uses about our all being members of one body has any true deep meaning in it, we shall have just a glimmering of how it can be so. Come, then, we will kneel together, and I will pray with you."

Thomas felt more solemn by far than he had ever felt in his life when he rose from that prayer.

"Now," said Mr. Fuller, "go and see your friends. When you think of it, my boy," he added, after a pause during which he held Tom's hand in a warm grasp, "you will see how God has been looking after you, giving you friend after friend of such different sorts to make up for the want of a father, and so driving you home at last, home to himself. He had to drive you; but he will lead you now. You will be home by half-past six or seven?"

Thomas assented. He could not speak. He

could only return the grasp of Mr. Fuller's hand. Then he took his cap and went.

It is needless to give any detailed account of Thomas's meeting with the Pottses. He did not see the captain, who had gone down to his brig. Mrs. Potts (and Bessie too, after a fashion) welcomed him heartily; but Mr. Potts was a little aggrieved that he would drink nothing but a glass of bitter ale. He had the watch safe, and brought it out gladly when Thomas produced his check.

Jim Salter dropped in at the last moment. He had heard the night before that Thomas was restored to society and was expected to call at the Mermaid some time that day. So he had been in or looking in a dozen times since the morning. When he saw Tom, who was just taking his leave, he came up to him, holding out his hand, but speaking as with a sense of wrong.

"How do do, gov'nor? Who'd ha' thought to see you here! Ain't you got ne'er another sixpence to put a name upon it? You're fond o' sixpences, you are, gov'nor."

"What do you mean, Jim?" asked Thomas in much bewilderment.

"To think o' treatin' a man and a brother as you've treated me, after I'd been and devoted my life, leas'tways a good part of it, to save you from the pellice! Four and sixpence!"

Still bewildered, Thomas appealed to Mr. Potts, whose face looked as like a caricature of the moon as ever, although he had just worked out a very neat little problem in diplomaey.

"It's my fault, Mr. Worboise," he responded in his usual voice, which seemed to come from a throat lined with the insides of dates. "I forgot to tell you, sir, that, that— Don't you see, Jim, you fool!" he said, changing the object of his address abruptly—"you wouldn't have liked to rob a gentleman like that by takin' of half a suvering for loafin' about for a day with him when he was hard up. But as he's come by his own again, why there's no use in keeping it from you any longer. So there's your five and sixpence. But it's a devil of a shame. Go out of my house."

"Whew!" whistled Jim Salter. "Two words to that, gov'nor o' the Marmad. You've been and kep' me all this many a day out of my inheritance, as they say at the Britannary. What do you say to that, sir? What do you think o' yerself, sir? I wait a reply, as the butcher said to the pig."

While he spoke, Jim pocketed the money. Receiving no reply except a sniff of Mr. Potts's red nose, he broke out again, more briefly—

"I tell ee what, gov'nor of the Marmad, I don't go out o' your house till I've put a name upon it."

Quite defeated and rather dejected, Mr. Potts took down his best brandy, and poured out a bumper.

Jim tossed it off, and set down the glass. Then, and not till then, he turned to Thomas, who had been looking on, half vexed with Mr. Potts, and half amused with Jim.

"Well, I am glad, Mr. Wurbus, as you've turned out a honest man arter all. I assure you, sir, at one time, and that not much farther off than that 'ere glass o' rum—"

"Brandy, you loafing rascal! the more's the pity," said Mr. Potts.

"Than that 'ere glass o' rum," repeated Jim,

"I had my doubts. I wasn't so sure of it, as the fox was o' the goose when he had his neck atwixt his teeth."

So saying, and without another word, Jim Salter turned and left the Mermaid. Jim was one of those who seem to have an especial organ for the sense of wrong, from which organ no amount or kind of explanation can ever remove an impression. They prefer to cherish it. Their very acknowledgments of error are uttered in a tone that proves they consider the necessity of making them only in the light of accumulated injury.

CHAPTER I.

THOMAS AND LUCY.

WHEN Lucy came home the night before, she found her grandmother sitting by the fire, gazing reproachfully at the coals. The poor woman had not yet reconciled herself to her altered position. Widdles was in vain attempting to attract her attention; but, not being gifted with speech like his grey brother in the cage next to his—whose morals, by the way, were considerably reformed, thanks to his master's judicious treatment of him—he had but few modes of bringing his wishes to bear at a distance. He could only rattle his beak on the bars of his cage, and give a rending shriek.

The immediate occasion of her present mood was Thomas's note, which was over her head on the mantle-piece. Notes had occasionally passed between him and Lucy, and she knew the handwriting. She regarded him with the same feelings with which she regarded his father, but she knew that Lucy did not share in these feelings. And forgetting that she was now under Lucy's protection, she was actually rowing with herself at the moment Lucy entered that if she had one word of other than repudiation to say to Thomas, she would turn her out of the house. She was not going to encourage such lack of principle. She gave her no greeting, therefore, when she entered; but Lucy, whose quick eye caught sight of the note at once, did not miss it. She took the note with a trembling hand, and hurried from the room. Then Mrs. Boxall burst into a blaze.

"Where are you off to now, you minx?" she said.

"I am going to put my bonnet off, grannie," answered Lucy, understanding well enough, and waiting no farther parley.

She could hardly open the note, which was fastened with a wafer, her hands trembled so much. Before she had read it through she fell on her knees, and thus, like Hezekiah, "spread it before the Lord," and finished it so.

And now, indeed, was her captivity turned. She had nothing to say but "Thank God!" she had nothing to do but weep. True, she was a little troubled that she could not reply; but when she made inquiry about the messenger, to see if she could learn any thing of where Tom was to be found, Mr. Kately, who, I have said, returned home immediately after Mr. Fuller dismissed him (though in his anxiety he went back and loitered about the church door), told her that young Worboise was at that moment with Mr. Fuller in his vestry. He did

not tell her how he came to be there. Nothing, therefore, remained for her but to be patient, and wait for what would come next. And the next thing was a note from Mr. Fuller, telling her that Thomas was at his house, bidding her be of good cheer, and saying that she should hear from him again to-morrow. She did not sleep much that night.

But she had a good deal to bear from her grandmother before she reached the haven of bed. First of all, she insisted on knowing what the young villain had written to her about. How *dared* he?—and so on. Lucy tried to pacify her, and said she would tell her about it afterward. Then she broke out upon herself, saying she knew it was nothing to Lucy what became of her. No doubt she would be glad enough to make her own terms, marry her grandmother's money, and turn her out of doors. But if she dared to say one word to the rascal after the way he had behaved to her, one house should not hold them both, and that she told her. But it is ungracious work recording the spiteful utterances of an ill-used woman. They did not go very deep into Lucy, for she knew her grandmother by this time. Also her hope for herself was large enough to include her grandmother.

And soon as Thomas left him in the morning, Mr. Fuller wrote again—only to say that he would call upon her in the evening. He did not think it necessary to ask her to be at home; nor did he tell her any thing of Tom's story. He thought it best to leave that to himself. Lucy was strongly tempted to send excuses to her pupils that morning and remain at home, in case Thomas might come. But she concluded that she ought to do her work, and leave possibilities where alone they were determined. So she went and gave her lessons with as much care as usual, and more energy.

When she got home she found that Mr. Fuller had been there, but had left a message that he would call again. He was so delighted with the result of his efforts with Tom, that he could not wait till the evening. Still, he had no intention of taking the office of a mediator between them. That, he felt, would be to intrude for the sake of making himself of importance; and he had learned that one of the virtues of holy and true service, is to get out of the way as soon as possible.

About six o'clock he went again, and was shown into the book-seller's back parlor, where he found both Lucy and her grandmother.

"Will you come out with me, Miss Burton, for an hour or so?" he said.

"I wonder at you, Mr. Fuller," interposed Mrs. Boxall—"a clergyman, too!"

It is a great pity that people should so little restrain themselves when they are most capable of doing so, that when they are old, excitement should make them act like the fools that they are not.

Mr. Fuller was considerably astonished, but did not lose his self-possession.

"Surely you are not afraid to trust her with me, Mrs. Boxall?" he said, half merrily.

"I don't know that, sir. I hear of very strange goings-on at your church. Service every day, the church always open, and all that! As if folks had nothing to do but say their prayers."

"I don't think you would talk like that, Mrs. Boxall," said Mr. Fuller, with no less point that he said it pleasantly, "if you had been saying your prayers lately."

"You have nothing to do with my prayers, sir."

"Nor you with my church, Mrs. Boxall. But come—don't let us quarrel. I don't wonder at your being put out sometimes, I'm sure; you've had so much to vex you. But it hasn't been Lucy's fault; and I'm sure I would gladly give you your rights if I could."

"I don't doubt it, sir," said the old lady, mollified. "Don't be long, Lucy. And don't let that young limb of Satan talk you over. Mind what I say to you."

Not knowing how to answer, without offending her grandmother, Lucy only made haste to get her bonnet and cloak. Mr. Fuller took her straight to his own house. The grimy unlovely streets were, to Lucy's enlightened eyes, full of a strange beautiful mystery, as she walked along leaning on her friend's arm. She asked him no questions, content to be led toward what was awaiting her. It was a dark and cloudy night, but a cool west wind, that to her feelings was full of spring, came down Bagot Street, blowing away the winter and all its miseries. A new time of hope was at hand. Away with it went all thought of Thomas's past behavior. He was repentant. The prodigal had turned to go home, and she would walk with him and help his homeward steps. She loved him, and would love him more than ever. If there was more joy in heaven over one such than over ninety-and-nine who were not such, why not more joy in her soul? Her heart beat so violently as she crossed Mr. Fuller's threshold, that she could hardly breathe. He took her into the sitting-room, where a most friendly fire was blazing, and left her.

Still she had asked no questions. She knew that she was going to see Thomas. Whether he was in the house or not, she did not know. She hardly cared. She could sit there, she thought, for years waiting for him; but every ring of the door-bell made her start and tremble. There were so many rings that her heart had hardly time to quiet itself a little from one before another set it beating again worse than ever. At length there came a longer pause, and she fell into a dreamy study of the fire. The door opened at length, and she thought it was Mr. Fuller, and, not wishing to show any disquietude, sat still. A moment more, and Thomas was kneeling at her feet. He had good cause to kneel. He did not offer to touch her. He only said, in a choked voice, "Lucy," and bowed his head before her. She put her hands on the bowed head, drew it softly on her knees, gave one long, gentle, but irrepressible wail like a child, and burst into a quiet passion of tears. Thomas drew his head from her hands, sank on the floor, and lay sobbing, and kissing her feet. She could not move to make him cease. But when she recovered herself a little, after a measureless time to both of them, she stopped, put her hands round upon his face, and drew him upward. He rose, but only to his knees.

"Lucy, Lucy," he sobbed, "will you forgive me?"

He could not say more yet. She bent forward and kissed his forehead.

"I have been very wicked. I will tell you all about it—every thing."

"No, no, Thomas. Only love me."

"I love you—oh! I love you with all my heart and soul. I don't deserve to be allowed to love one of your hands; but if you will only let me love you I will be your slave forever. I don't even ask you to love me one little bit. If you will only let me love you!"

"Thomas," said Lucy, slowly, and struggling with her sobs, "my heart is so full of love and gladness that it is like to break. I can't speak."

By degrees they grew calmer, but Thomas could not rest till she knew all.

"Lucy," he said, "I can't be sure that all you give me is really mine till I've told you every thing. Perhaps you won't love me—not so much—when you know all. So I must tell you."

"I don't care what it is, Thomas, for I am sure you won't again."

"I will not," said Thomas, solemnly. "But please, Lucy darling, listen to me—for my sake, not for your own, for it will hurt you so."

"If it will make you easier, Thomas, tell me every thing."

"I will—I will. I will hide nothing."

And Thomas did tell her every thing. But Lucy cried so much, that when he came to the part describing his adventures in London after he took the money, he felt greatly tempted, and yielded to the temptation, to try to give her the comical side as well. And at the very first hint of fun in the description he gave of Jim Salter, Lucy burst into such a fit of laughter, that Thomas was quite frightened, for it seemed as if she would never stop. So that between the laughing and crying Thomas felt like Christian between the quagmire and the pitfalls, and was afraid to say any thing. But at length the story was told; and how Lucy did, besides laughing and crying, at every new turn of the story—to show my reader my confidence in him I leave all that to his imagination, assuring him only that it was all right between them. My women readers will not require even this amount of information, for they have the gift of understanding without being told.

When he came to the point of his father offering to provide for them if he would give up Lucy, he hesitated, and said—

"Ought I to have done it, Lucy, for your sake?"

"For my sake, Tom! If you had said for granny's— But I know her well enough to be absolutely certain that she would starve rather than accept a penny from him, except as her right. Besides, I can make more money in a year than he would give her, I am pretty sure. So if you will keep me, Tom, I will keep her."

Here Lucy discovered that she had said something very improper, and hid her face in her hands. But a knock came at the door, and then both felt so shy that neither dared to say, *Come in*. Therefore Mr. Fuller put his head in without being told and said—

"Have you two young people made it up yet?"

"Have we, Tom?" said Lucy.

"I don't know," said Tom. "What was it, sir?"

Mr. Fuller laughed heartily, came near, put a hand on the head of each, and said—

"God bless you. I too am glad at my very heart. Now you must come to supper."

But at supper, which the good man had actually cleared his table to have in the study that he might not disturb them so soon, Thomas had a good many questions to ask. And he kept on asking, for he wanted to understand the state of the case between Mrs. Boxall and his father. All at once, at one reply, he jumped from his seat, looking very strange.

"I must be off, Lucy. You won't hear from me for a day or two. Good-bye, Mr. Fuller. I haven't time for a word," he said, pulling out his watch. "Something may be done yet. It may all come to nothing. Don't ask me any questions. I may save months."

He rushed from the room, and left Mr. Fuller and Lucy staring at each other. Mr. Fuller started up a moment after and ran to the door, but only to hear the outer door bang, and Thomas shout—"Cab ahoy!" in the street. So there was nothing for it but to take Lucy home again. He left her at Mr. Kitley's door.

"Well, miss, what have you been about?" said her grandmother.

"Having a long talk with Thomas, grannie," answered Lucy.

"You have!" exclaimed Mrs. Boxall, who had expected nothing else, rising slowly from her seat with the air of one about to pronounce a solemn malediction.

"Yes, grannie; but he knew nothing till this very night about the way his father has behaved to us."

"He made you believe that, did he?"

"Yes, grannie."

"Then you're a fool. He didn't know, did he? Then you'll never see him again. He comes of a breed bad enough to believe any thing of. You give him up, or I give you up."

"No, I won't, grannie," said Lucy, smiling in her face.

"You or I leave this house, then."

"I won't, grannie."

"Then I will."

"Very well, grannie," answered Lucy, putting her arms round her, and kissing her. "Shall I fetch your bonnet?"

Grannie vouchsafed no reply, but took her candle and went—up to bed.

CHAPTER LI.

JACK OF THE NINGPO.

My reader will know better than Lucy or Mr. Fuller what Thomas was after. Having only a hope, he did not like to say much, and therefore, as well as that he might not lose the chance of a night train, he hurried away. The first thing he did was to drive to a certain watchmaker's, to raise money, if he could, once more on his watch and on Lucy's ring, which I need not say remained in his possession. But the shop was shut. Then he drove to the Mermaid, and came upon Captain Smith as he was emptying his tumbler of grog preparatory to going to bed.

"I say, captain, you must let Robins off this voyage. I want him to go to Newcastle with me."

"What's up now? Ain't he going to Newcastle? And you can go with him if you like."

"I want him at once. It's of the greatest importance."

"You won't find him to-night, I can tell you. You'd better sit down and have something, and tell us all about it."

When Thomas thought, he saw that nothing could be done till next day. Without money, without Robins, without a train in all probability, he was helpless. Therefore he sat down and told the captain what he was after, namely, to find Robins's friend Jack, whose surname he did not know, and see what evidence he could give upon the question of the order of decease in the family of Richard Boxall. He explained the point to the captain, who saw at once that Robins's services must be dispensed with for this voyage—except indeed he returned before they weighed anchor again, which was possible enough. When Tom told him what he had heard Jack say about little Julia, the captain, pondering it over, gave it as his judgment that Jack, being the only one saved, and the child being with him till she died, there was a probability almost of his being able to prove that she outlived the rest. At all events, he said, no time must be lost in finding this Jack.

Mr. Potts having joined them, they sat talking it over a long time. At last Tom said—

"There's one thing I shall be more easy when I've told you: that lawyer is my father."

"God bless my soul!" said Mr. Potts, while Captain Smith said something decidedly different. "So, you'll oblige me," Tom went on, "if you'll say nothing very hard of him, for I hope he will live to be horribly ashamed of himself."

"Here's long life to him!" said Captain Smith.

"And no success this bout!" added Mr. Potts.

"Amen to both, and thank you," said Tom.

Mrs. Potts would have got the same bed ready for him that he had had before, but as the captain was staying all night, Tom insisted on sleeping on the sofa. He wanted to be off to find Robins the first thing in the morning. It was, however, agreed that the captain should go and send Robins, while Thomas went to get his money. In a few hours Robins and he were off for Newcastle.

CHAPTER LII.

LUCY, AND MATTIE, AND POPPIE.

THE Saturday following Tom's departure Lucy had a whole holiday, and she resolved to enjoy it. Not much resolution was necessary for that; for every thing now was beautiful, and not even her grannie's fits of ill-humor could destroy her serenity. The old woman had, however, her better moments, in which she would blame her other self for her unkindness to her darling; only that repentance was forgotten the moment the fit came again. The saddest thing in the whole affair was to see how the prospect of wealth, and the loss of that prospect, worked for the temperamental ruin of the otherwise worthy old woman. Her goodness had had little foundation in principle; therefore, when the floods came and the winds blew, it could not stand

against them. Of course prosperity must be better for some people, so far as we can see, for they have it; and adversity for others, for they have it; but I suspect that each must have a fitting share of both; and no disposition, however good, can be regarded as tempered, and tried, and weather-proof, till it has had a trial of some proportion of both. I am not sure that both are absolutely necessary to all; I only say that we can not be certain of the character till we have seen it outstand both. The last thing Mrs. Boxall said to Lucy as she went out that morning, rousing herself from a dark-hued reverie over the fire, was—

"Lucy, if you marry that man I'll go to the workhouse."

"But they won't take you in, grannie, when you've got a granddaughter to work for you."

"I won't take a farthing of my own property but as my own right."

"Thomas won't have a farthing of it to offer you, grannie, I'm afraid. He quarrelled with his father just about that, and he's turned him out."

"Then I *must* go to the workhouse."

"And I'll bring you packets of tea and snuff, as they do for the old goodies in the dusters, grannie," said Lucy, merrily.

"Go along with you. You never had any heart but for your beaux."

"There's a little left for you yet, dear grannie. And for beaux, you know as well as I do that I never had but one."

So saying, she ran away, and up the court to Mr. Spelt's shop.

"Where's Poppie, Mr. Spelt?" she asked.

"In the house, I believe, miss."

"Will you let her come with me to the Zoological Gardens to-day?"

"With all my heart, miss. Shall I get down, and run up and tell her?"

"No, thank you; on no account. I'll go up myself."

She found Poppie actually washing cups and saucers, with her sleeves tucked up, and looking not merely a very lovely, but a very orderly maiden. No doubt she was very odd still, and would be to the end of her days. What she would do when she was too old (which would not be till she was too frail) to send, was inconceivable. But with all such good influences around her—her father, Mattie, Mr. Fuller, Lucy Burton—it was no wonder that the real woman in her should have begun to grow, and, having begun, should promise well for what was yet to be. There is scarcely any thing more marvelous in the appearance of simple womanliness under such circumstances in the child of the streets, than there is in its existence in the lady who has outgrown the ordinarily evil influences of the nursery, the school-room, and the boarding-school. Still, I must confess that any thing like other people might well be a little startling to one who had known Poppie a year before and had not seen her since. Lucy had had a great deal to do with the change; for she had been giving her regular lessons with Mattie for the last few months. The difficulty was, to get Poppie to open her mental eyes to any information that did not come by the sight of her bodily eyes. The conveyance of facts to her, not to say of thoughts or feelings, by words, except in regard to things she was quite

used to, was almost an impossibility. For a long time she only stared and looked around her now and then, as if she would be so glad to scud if she dared. But she loved Lucy, who watched long and anxiously for some sign of dawning interest. It came at last. Nor let my reader suspect the smallest atom of satire in her most innocent remark: "Was Jesus a man? I sposed he wor a clergyman!" But having once got a glimpse of light, her eyes, if they opened slowly, strengthened rapidly. Her acquisition was not great, that is, but she learned to think with an amount of reality which showed that, while she retained many of the defects of childhood, she retained also some of its most valuable characteristics.

The contrast with Mattie was very remarkable. Poppie was older than Mattie, I have said; but while Mattie talked like an old woman, Poppie talked like a baby. The remarks of each formed a strange opposition, both in manner and form, to her appearance, as far as bodily growth was concerned. But the faces were consistent with the words. There was, however, a very perceptible process of what may be called a double endosmose and exosmose going on between them. Poppie was getting wiser, and Mattie was getting merrier. Sometimes, to the delight of Mr. Kitley, they would be heard frolicking about his house like kittens. Such a burst, however, would seldom last long; for Mrs. Boxall resented it as unfeeling toward her misfortunes, and generally put a stop to it. This did not please Mr. Kitley at all. It was, in fact, the only thing that he found annoying in the presence of Mrs. Boxall in his house. But he felt such a kindly pity for the old woman that he took no notice of it, and intimated to Mattie that it was better to give up to her.

"The old lady is cranky to-day. She don't feel comfortable in her inside," he would say; and Mattie would repeat the remark to Poppie, as if it were her own. There was one word in it, however, which, among others of her vocabulary, making the antique formality of her speech so much the more ludicrous, she could not pronounce.

"The old lady don't feel over comfible in her inside to-day. We must drop it, or she'll be worse," Mattie would gravely remark to Poppie, and the tumult would be heard no more that day, or at least for an hour, when, if they were so long together, it might break out again.

Every now and then some strange explosion of Arab habits or ways of thinking would shock Mattie; but from seeing that it did not shock Miss Burton so much, she became, by degrees, considerably less of a little prig. Childhood revived in her more and more.

"Will you come with me to-day, Poppie, to see the wild beasts?" said Lucy.

"But they'll eat us, won't they?"

"Oh no, child. What put that into your head?"

"I thought they always did."

"They always would if they could. But they can't."

"Do they pull their teeth out, then?"

"You come and see. I'll take care of you."

"Is Mattie going?"

"Yes."

"Then I'll come."

She threw down the saucer she was washing, dried her hands in her apron, and stood ready to follow.

"No, no, Poppie; that won't do. You must finish washing up and drying your breakfast things. Then you must put on your cloak and hat, and make yourself look nice and tidy, before I can take you."

"If it's only the beasts, miss! They ain't very particler, I guess."

Was this the old word of Chaucer indigenous, or a slip from the American slip?

"It's not for the beasts, but because you ought always to be tidy. There will be people there, of course, and it's disrespectful to other people to be untidy."

"I didn't know, miss. Would they give I to the bears?"

"Poppie, you're a goose. Come along. Make haste."

The children had never seen any but domestic animals before, and their wonder and pleasure in these strange new forms of life were boundless. Mattie caught the explosive affection from Poppie, and Lucy had her reward in the outbursts of interest, as varied in kind as the animals themselves, that rose on each side of her. The differences, too, between the children were very notable. Poppie shrieked with laughter at the monkeys; Mattie turned away, pale with dislike. Lucy overcame her own feelings in the matter for Poppie's sake, but found that Mattie had disappeared. She was standing outside the door, waiting for them.

"I can't make it out," she said, putting her hand into Lucy's.

"What can't you make out, Mattie?"

"I can't make out why God made monkeys."

Now, this was a question that might well puzzle Mattie. Indeed, Lucy had no answer to give her. I dare say Mr. Fuller might have had something to say on the subject, but Lucy could only reply, "I don't know, my dear;" for she did not fancy it a part of a teacher's duty to tell lies, pretending acquaintance with what she did not know any thing about. Poppie had no difficulty about the monkeys; but the lions and tigers, and all the tearing creatures were a horror to her; and if she did not put the same question as Mattie had put about the monkeys, it was only because she had not yet felt any need for understanding the creation of God in relation to him. In other words, she had not yet begun to construct her little individual scheme of the universe, which, sooner or later, must, I presume, be felt by every one as an indispensable necessity. Mr. Fuller would have acknowledged the monkeys as to him a far more important difficulty than the ferocious animals, and would probably have accepted the swine as a greater perplexity than either. Perhaps the readiest answer—I say *readiest* only, but I would not use the word answer at all, except it involved the elements of solution—for Lucy to give would have been—

"They disgust you, you say, Mattie? Then that is what God made them for."

A most incomplete, but most true and important reply—and the *readiest*.

Poppie shouted with delight to see the seals tumble into the water, dive deep, then turn on their backs and look up at her. But their large,

round, yet pathetic, dog-like eyes, fixed upon her, made the tears come in Mattie's eyes, as they dreamed up and down and athwart the water-deeps with such a gentle power as destroyed all notion of force to be met or force to overcome.

Another instance or two, to show the difference between the children, and we shall return to the business of my story. There are, or were then, two or three little animals in a cage—I forget the name of them: they believe in somersaults—that the main object of life is to run round and round, doing the same thing with decency and order—that is, turning heels over head every time they arrive at a certain spot.

With these pretty enough, and more than comical enough creatures, Poppie was exquisitely delighted. She laughed and clapped her hands and shouted—

"Now, now! Do it again. There you are! Heels over head. All right, little one! Round you go. Now, now! There you are!" and so on.

Mattie turned away, saying only to Lucy—

"They don't make any thing of it. They're no farther on at night than they were in the morning. I hate roundabouts. Poor little things!"

They came to the camel's house, and, with other children, they got upon his back. After a short and not over comfortable ride, they got down again. Poppie took hold of Lucy's sleeve, and, with solemn face, asked—

"Is it alive, miss?"

"How can you ask such a question, Poppie?"

"I only wanted to know if it was alive."

She was not sure that he did not go by machinery. Mattie gazed at her with compassionate superiority, and said—

"Poppie, I should like to hear what you tell Mr. Spelt when you get home. You *are* ignorant."

At this Poppie only grinned. She was not in the least offended. She even, I dare say, felt some of the same admiration for herself that one feels for an odd plaything.

Lucy's private share of the day's enjoyment lay outside the gardens. There the buds were bursting everywhere. Out of the black bark, all begrimed with London smoke and London dirt, flowed the purest green. Verily there is One that can bring a clean thing out of an unclean. Reviving nature was all in harmony with Lucy's feelings this day. It was the most simply happy day she had ever had. The gentle wind with its cold and its soft streaks fading and reviving, the blue sky with its few flying undefined masses of whiteness, the shadow of green all around—for when she looked through the trees, it was like looking through a thin green cloud or shadow—the gay songs of the birds, each of which, unlike the mocking-bird within, was content to sing his own song—a poor thing, it might be, but his own—his notion of the secret of things, of the well-being of the universe—all combined in one harmony with her own world inside, and made her more happy than she had ever been before, even in a dream.

She was walking southward through the Park, for she wanted to take the two children to see Mrs. Morgenstern. They were frolicking

about her, running hither and thither, returning at frequent intervals to claim each one of her hands, when she saw Mr. Sargent coming toward her. She would not have avoided him if she could, for her heart was so gay that it was strong as well. He lifted his hat. She offered her hand. He took it, saying—

"This is more than I deserve, Miss Burton, after the abominable way I behaved to you last time I saw you. I see you have forgiven me. But I dare hardly accept your forgiveness; it is so much more than I deserve."

"I know what it is to suffer, Mr. Sargent, and there is no excuse I could not make for you. Perhaps the best proof I can give that I wish to forget all that passed on that dreadful evening is to be quite open with you still. I have seen Mr. Worboise since then," she went on regardless of her own blushes. "He had been led astray, but not so much as you thought. He brought me back the ring you mentioned."

If Mr. Sargent did not place much confidence in the reformation Lucy hinted at, it is not very surprising. No doubt the fact would destroy any possibly lingering hope he yet cherished, but this was not all; he was quite justified in regarding with great distrust any such change as her words implied. He had known, even in his own comparatively limited experience, so many cases of a man's having, to all appearance, entirely abjured his wicked ways for the sake of a woman, only to return, after marriage, like the sow that was washed, to his wallowing in the mire, that his whole soul shrunk from the idea of such an innocent creature falling a prey to her confidence in such a man as Worboise most probably was. There was nothing to be said at present on the subject, however, and after a few more words they parted—Lucy, to pursue her dream of delight—Mr. Sargent, lawyer-like, to make farther inquiry.

CHAPTER LIII.

MOLKEN ON THE SCENT.

Now it had so happened that Mr. Molken had caught sight of Tom as he returned from his visit to his mother, and had seen him go into Mr. Fuller's house. His sailor's dress piqued the curiosity which he naturally felt with regard to him; and as, besides, the rascal fed upon secrets, gave him hope of still making something out of him if he could but get him again in his power. Therefore he watched the house with much patience, saw Mr. Fuller go out and return again with Lucy, whom he knew by sight, and gave to the phenomenon what interpretation his vile nature was capable of, concluding that Tom was in want of money—as he himself generally was—and would get something out of Lucy before they parted: he had stored the fact of the ring in his usual receptacle for such facts. Besides, he had been in communication with a lawyer, for he could see well enough that Mr. Sargent belonged to that profession, concerning this very Thomas Worboise: perhaps he *was wanted*, and if so, why should not he reap what benefit might be reaped from aiding in his capture? With all these grounds for hope, he was able to persevere in watching

the house till Thomas came out alone evidently in great haste and excitement. He accosted him then as he hurried past but Tom, to whom the sight of him recalled no cherished memories, and who did not feel that he owed him any gratitude for favors received, felt that it would be the readiest and surest mode of procedure to cut him at once, and did so, although he could not prevent Molken from seeing that he knew him, and did not choose to know him. This added immeasurably to Molken's determination, for now his feelings as a *gentleman* were enlisted on the same side. He was too prudent, if not too cowardly, to ask him what he meant; nor would that mode have served his turn; it fitted his nature and character better to lurk and watch. When Tom got into a cab, Molken therefore got into another, and gave the driver directions to keep Tom's in sight, but not to follow so closely as to occasion suspicion. He ran him to earth at the Mermaid. There he peeped in at the door, and finding that he must have gone into the house, became more and more satisfied that he was after something or other which he wanted to keep dark—something fitted, in fact, for Molken to do himself, or to turn to his advantage if done by another. He entered the bar, called for a glass of hot gin and water, and got into conversation with Mr. Potts. The landlord of the Mermaid, however, although a man of slow mental processes, had instinct enough, and experience more than enough, to dislike the look of Molken. He gave him, therefore, such short answers as especially suited his own style, refused to be drawn into conversation, and persisted in regarding him merely as the purchaser of a glass of gin and water, hot with. On such an occasion Mr. Potts's surly grandeur could be surpassed by no bar-keeper in England. But this caution completed Molken's conviction that Thomas was about something dark, and that the landlord of the Mermaid was in it, too; the more conclusively when, having, by way of experiment, mentioned Thomas's name as known to Mr. Potts, the latter cunningly repudiated all knowledge of "the party." Molken therefore left the house, and after doubling a little, betook himself to a coffee-shop opposite, whence he could see the door of the Mermaid from the window, and by a proper use of shillings, obtained leave to pass as much of the night there as he pleased. He thought he saw Thomas, with a light in his hand, draw down the dingy blind of an upper window: and concluding that he had gone to bed Molken threw himself on one of the seats, and slept till daylight, when he resumed his watch. At length he saw him come out with another man in the dress of a sailor like himself, but part with him at the door, and walk off in the direction of the City. He then followed him, saw him go into the watchmaker's, and come out putting something in his trousers' pocket, followed him again, and observed that the ring, which he knew, and which he had seen on his hand as he came behind him from Limehouse, was gone, as well as his watch, which he had seen him use the night before, while now he looked up at every clock he passed. Nor did he leave his track till he saw him get into a train at King's Cross, accompanied by another sailor, not the one he had seen in the morning, whom

he met evidently by appointment at the station. Here the condition of his own funds brought Molken to a pause, or he would very likely have followed his wild-goose chase to Newcastle at least. As it was, he could only find out where they were going, and remain behind with the hope of being one day called upon to give evidence that would help to hang him. Nor had he long to wait before something seemed likely to come of all his painstaking. For after a few days he had a second visit from Mr. Sargent, to whom, however, he was chary of his information till bribed by a couple of sovereigns. Then he told him all. The only point Mr. Sargent could at once lay hold of was the ring. He concluded that he had recovered the ring merely to show it to her, and again make away with it, which must even in her eyes look bad enough to justify any amount of jealousy as to the truth of his reformation. Acting on this fresh discovery, he went to the watchmaker's—a respectable man who did business in a quiet way, and had accommodated Tom only for old acquaintance's sake, not, however, knowing much about him. Mr. Sargent told him who he was, gave him his card, and easily prevailed on him to show the watch and the ring. The latter especially Mr. Sargent examined, and finding quite peculiarity enough about it to enable him to identify it by description, took his leave.

Nor had it not been for Thomas's foolish, half-romantic way of doing things, no evil could have come of this. If when he found that he had still a little time, he had returned and fully explained to his friends what his object was when he left them so suddenly, all would have been accounted for. He liked importance, and surprises, and secrecy. But this was self-indulgence, when it involved the possibility of so much anxiety as a lengthened absence must occasion Lucy, and Mr. Fuller too. They had a right, besides, to know every thing that he was about, after all that they had done for him, and still more from the fact that they were both so unselfishly devoted to his best good, and must keep thinking about him. Regarding his behavior in its true light, however, and coming to the obvious conclusion between themselves that Tom had a clew to some evidence, they remained at ease on the matter—which ease was a little troubled when Lucy received the following note from Mr. Sargent. Without the least intention of being unjust, he gave, as people almost always do, that coloring to his representation which belonged only to the colored medium of prejudice through which he viewed the object—

"DEAR MADAM,—Perfectly aware that I am building an insurmountable barrier between myself and my own peace, I am yet sufficiently disinterested to have some regard for yours. If you will only regard the fact as I have now stated it—that I have no hope for myself, that, on the contrary, I take the position, with all its obloquy, of the bringer of unwelcome tidings—you will, however you may regard me, be a little more ready to listen to what I have to communicate. From one of a certain gentleman's companions, of such unquestionable character that he refused information until I bribed him with the paltry sum of two pounds—(I at least am open, you see)—I learned that he had again parted with the

ring the possession of which he had apparently recovered only for the sake of producing it upon occasion of his late interview with you. You will say such testimony is no proof; but I will describe the ring which I found in the possession of the man to whom I was directed, leaving you to judge whether it is yours or not: A good-sized rose-diamond, of a pale straw color, with the figures of two serpents carved on the ring, the head of each meeting the body of the other round opposite sides of the diamond. Do not take the trouble to answer this letter, except I can be of service to you. All that it remains possible for me to request of you now is, that you will believe it is for your sake, and not for my own, that I write this letter. In God's name I beg that you will not give yourself into the power of a man whose behavior after marriage has not the benefit of even a doubt when regarded in the light of his behavior before it. If you will not grant me the justice of believing in my true reasons for acting as I do, I yet prefer to bear the consequences of so doing to the worse suffering of knowing that there was one effort I might have made and did not make for your rescue from the worst fate that can befall the innocent.

"Your obedient servant,

"J. SARGENT."

Lucy gave a little laugh to herself when she read the letter. There was no doubt about the ring being hers; but if Thomas had set out on the supposed errand it was easy to see that the poor fellow having no money, must have parted with her ring for the sake of procuring the means of doing her justice. But if this was so plain, why was it that Lucy sat still and pale for an hour after, with the letter in her hand, and that when she rose it was to go to Mr. Fuller with it? It was the source alone of Mr. Sargent's information that occasioned her the anxiety. If he had been as explicit about that as he was about the ring, telling how Molken had watched and followed Thomas, she would not have been thus troubled. And had Mr. Sargent been as desirous of being just to Thomas as of protecting Lucy, perhaps he would have told her more. But there are a thousand ways in which a just man may do injustice.

My reader must not suppose, however, that Lucy really distrusted Thomas. The worst that she feared was that he had not quite broken with his bad companions; and the very thought of Molken, returning upon her as she had seen him that night in the thunder-storm, and coming along with the thought of Thomas, was a distress to her. To be made thus unhappy it is not in the least necessary that one should really doubt, but that forms, ideas of doubt, should present themselves to the mind. They can not always be answered in a quiet triumphant fashion, for women have been false and men have been hypocrites in all ages; and the mind keeps seeking the triumphant answer and can not find it.

In something of this mood, and yet more vexed that such disquietude should have any place in her mind, regarding it as vile unfaithfulness on her part, she rose, and for the sake of hearing Mr. Fuller's answer justify her own confidence, took him the letter.

Having read it, the first words Mr. Fuller spoke, were—

"The writer of this is honest."

"Then you think it is all true!" said Lucy, in some dismay.

"What he tells as fact, no doubt is fact," answered Mr. Fuller. "It does not follow, however, that his conclusions are in the least correct. The most honest man is, if not as liable, yet as certainly liable to mistake as the most dishonest. It is indubitably out of regard for your welfare that he has written the letter; but you know all the other side of which he knows nothing. You don't believe it yourself, Lucy—the inference of Thomas's hypocrisy, I mean?"

"No, no," cried Lucy. "I do not."

"Facts are certainly stubborn things, as people say. But it is equally certain that they are the most slippery things to get a hold of. And even when you have got a hold of them, they can be used with such different designs—after such varying fashions, that no more unlike buildings can be constructed of the same bricks or hewn stones, than conclusions arrived at from precisely the same facts. And this because all the facts round about the known facts, and which keep those facts in their places, compelling them to combine after a certain fashion, are not known, or perhaps are all unknown. For instance, your correspondent does not know—at least he does not give you to understand that he knows how his informant arrived at the knowledge of the facts upon which he lays such stress. When I recall Thomas's whole bearing and conduct I can not for a moment accept the conclusions arrived at by him, whatever may be the present appearance of the facts he goes upon. Facts are like faces—capable of a thousand expressions and meanings. Were you satisfied entirely with Thomas's behavior in the talk you had with him?"

"Entirely. It left nothing to wish more, or different."

"Then you have far deeper ground to build upon than any of those facts. They can no more overturn your foundation than the thickest fog can remove the sun from the heavens. You can not *prove* that the sun is there. But neither can you have the smallest real doubt that he is there. You must wait with patience, believing all things, hoping all things."

"That is just what I have been saying to myself. Only I wanted to hear you say it too. I wanted it to come in at my ears as well as out of my heart."

When a month had passed away, however, bringing no news of Thomas; when another month had passed, and still he neither came nor wrote, hope deferred began to work its own work and make Lucy's heart sick. But she kept up bravely, through the help of her daily labor. Those that think it hard to have to work hard as well as endure other sore trials, little know how much those other trials are rendered endurable by the work that accompanies them. They regard the work as an additional burden, instead of as the prop which keeps their burdens from crushing them to the earth. The same is true of pain—sometimes of grief, sometimes of fear. And all of these are of the supports that keep the weight of evil within us, of selfishness, and the worship of false gods, from sinking us into Tophet. They keep us in some measure from putting our trust in that which is weak and bad,

even when they do but little to make us trust in God.

Nor did this season of trial to Lucy pass by without bringing some little measure of good to the poor, disappointed, fretful soul of her grandmother. How much Widdles had to do with it—and my reader must not despise Widdles: many a poor captive has been comforted by a mouse, a spider, a rat even: and I know a lady who, leading a hard life while yet a child, but possessing one little garret-room as her own, with a window that opened on the leads, cultivated green things there enough to feed a few pet snails, to each of which she gave the name of one of her best friends, great names, too, and living names, so that I will not, as she most innocently and lovingly did, associate them with snails, though even thus they were comforters to her brave heart;—how much Widdles had to do with it, I say, and how much the divine help of time, and a sacred deprivation of that hope in chance which keeps man sometimes from hoping in God, I can not tell: it was the work of the all-working Spirit, operating in and on her mind, mediately or immediately. She grew calmer, and began to turn her thoughts a little away from what she fancied might have been if things had not gone wrong so perversely, and to reflect on the fact, which she had often expressed in words, but never really thought about before—that it would be all the same a hundred years after—a saying which, however far from true—although, in fact, taken logically as it stands, absolutely false—yet has, wrapt up in it, after a clumsy fashion, a very great and important truth. By slow degrees her former cheerfulness began to show a little light over her hitherto gloomy horizon; her eyes beamed less turbid; she would smile occasionally, and her communications with Widdles grew more airy. I do most potently believe that Widdles was, not only in the *similarity*, but in the *infinitesimality* (I am sorry to have to coin a word) of his influence, homœopathically operative in working a degree of cure in the troubled nature of the old woman.

“Ah, Widdles, Widdles!” she would say, as she rubbed the unavailing Balm of Columbia on his blue back, “you and I know what trouble is! Don't we, old bird?”

She began to have a respect for her own misfortunes, which indicated that they had begun to recede a little from the point of her vision. To have had misfortunes is the only distinction some can claim. How much that can distinguish one man from another, judge, oh Humanity. But the heart that knows its own bitterness too often forgets that there is more bitterness in the world than that.

Widdles would cock his magnificent head and whiskers on one side, and wink with one eye, as much as to say, “I believe you, old girl.” Then he would turn his denuded, featherless back upon her, as much as to add with more solemnity: “Contemplate my condition, madam. Behold me. Imagine what I once was, that you may understand the spite of fortune which has reduced me to my present bareness. Am I not a spectacle to men and angels? And am I not therefore distinguished above my fellows?” Perhaps, however, I am all wrong in giving this interpretation to the actions of the bird. Perhaps the influence that flowed from him into the heart

of Mrs. Boxall was really such as, put in words, would amount to this: “Here I am without a feather to hide my somewhat skinny proportions; but what the worse am I? Who cares? So long as you don't I don't. Let's turn about once more. My dancing days are over; but life is life, even without feathers.”

If Mrs. Boxall had had her way with Widdles, he would have turned out a resplendent bird in spite of fate. But if you had told her not to be distressed at his nakedness, for God cared for Widdles, not as much, but as well as for her, she would have judged you guilty of something like blasphemy. Was it because the bird was comical, as even she admitted, that you must not speak of God's care in relation to him? Certainly, however, he sowed not neither did he reap; and as for a barn to store his winter-grain in—poor Widdles! Yet, was he forgotten? Mrs. Boxall was the last person who could say so, with her sugar, her nuts, her unguents of price—though the latter, clearly a striving against Providence, were not of so much account in the eyes of the bird. I dare say he found them soothing, though.

However all these things may have been, one thing is certain, that Mrs. Boxall began to recover her equanimity, and at length even her benevolence toward men in general—with one class exception, that of lawyers, and two individual exceptions, those of old Worboise and young Worboise. I believe she had a vague conviction that it was one of the malignant class above mentioned that had plucked Widdles. “Ah, my poor Widdles! Them lawyers!” she would say. “You would have been a very different person indeed, Widdles, if hadn't been for them. But it'll be all the same in a hundred years, Widdles. Keep up heart, old bird. It'll all be over soon. If you die before me, I'll put you on a winding-sheet that'll be a deal more comfortable than dead feathers, and I'll bury you with my own hands. But what'll you do for me, if I die first, you little scarecrow? You'll look about for me, won't you? That's about all you can do. And you'll miss the bits of sugar. Mattie, my dear, mind that Widdles has his sugar, and every thing regular after I'm dead and gone.”

She began to take to Mattie again, and even to make her read to her of a Sunday. But this, as of old, gave rise to much difference of opinion between them, which, however, resulted in the old woman's learning something from the child, if not in the immediate case, yet in the next similar case. For it often happens that a man who has opposed another's opinion bitterly in regard to the individual case that occasioned the difference, will act entirely according to that other's judgment in the next precisely similar case that occurs; although if you were to return to the former, he would take up his former position with an access of obstinacy in the reaction from having yielded to argument. Something like this took place between Grannie and Mattie. It was amusing to hear how the former would attribute all the oddities of the latter to the fact that she belonged to the rising generation, never seeming to suspect that Mattie was an exception to children in general, as peculiar as Widdles in relation to birds.

CHAPTER LIV.

GRANNIE APPEALS TO WIDDLES.

ONE sultry evening in summer, Lucy was seated at her piano, which had its place in Mr. Kite-ly's back parlor, near the black oak cabinet, but she was not playing. She had just been singing a little song from some unknown pen, which she had found with music of her father's in the manuscripts he had left her. This was the song:

1.
Sunshine fair.
In the air,
On the earth!
Everywhere
Waking mirth!
Stay not there.
I sit apart
By the hearth
Of my heart
In the dark.
Dost thou mark
How I sit
In the dark,
With my grief,
Nursing it?
Bring relief,
Sunny gold!
Look, I set
Open door
Thee before,
And the fold
Of my curtain draw
aside.
Enter, enter, golden
tide.

2.
Summer Wind,
Nature's laughter!
Of sweet smiling
Waker, wafter!
Care beguiling,
Toying, willing,
Never glance
Throw behind.
In the dance
Still advance,
To the past
Deaf and blind,
Follow after,
Fleet and fast,
Newer gladness,
Careless wind!
See the sadness
Of my mind.
Over river,
Hill and hollow,
Resting never,
Thou dost follow
Other graces,
Lovelier places,
Newer flowers,
Leafier bowers:
I still sit
Nursing it—
My old sorrow—
Night and morrow.
All my mind
Looks behind,
And I fret.
Look, I set
A wide door
Thee before,
And my casement open
lay:
Come, and blow my
cares away.

3.
Sunshine fair!
Of the saint
Gild the hair;
Wake the child,
With his mirth
Send him wild.
To the faint
Give new breath;
From the earth

Take the death,
Take the death.
'Tis in vain
To complain,
And implore
Thee to glide,
Thee to glow,
In my mind;
For my care
Will nevermore
Rise and go.
Open door,
Windows wide,
I do find
Yield no way
To the mind.
Glow and play,
Come and go,
Glance and glow,
To and fro,
Through the air!
Thou would'st say,
As ye use,
Thou and Wind,
Forget;
But not yet
I would choose
That way:

Shine and glitter, come
and go;
Pass me by, and leave
me so.

4.
And I whisper
To the wind,
Evening tisper
In the curl
Of the girl,
Who, all kind,
Waits her lover—
Waft and lover,
Linger over
Her bright color,
Waft her dolor
O'er the ocean,
With a faint,
Revising motion.
Blow her plaint
From the maiden
Sorrow-laden;
Take all grief,
Which to lose
Were relief.
Leave me, leave me, for
I choose
Still to clasp my grief.

5.
Sunshine fair!
Windy air!
Come and go,
Glance and glow,
Shine and show,
Waft and blow!
Neither choosing
Nor refusing,
Neither fretting
Nor forgetting,
I will set
Open yet
Door and pane.
You may come,
Or the rain:
I will set,
Infliferent,
Open yet
Door and pane.

Sun and wind,
Rain-cloud blind,
Parted, blent,
There is room,
Go and come.
Loving only
To be lonely,
To be sad,
I repent,

Sun and wind.
That I went
You to find:
I was rent
In my mind.
Sun and wind, do what
ye will;
I sit looking backward
still.

Lucy, I say, had finished this song, and was sitting silent before the instrument, with her hands laid on the keys, which had just ceased the long-drawn sound, and again sunk into stillness. Two arms came round her from behind. She did not start. She was taken by but not with surprise. She was always with him in mood, if not in thought, and his bodily presence therefore overcame her only as a summer cloud. She leaned back into his embrace, and burst into tears. Then she would rise to look at him, and he let her go. She saw him rather ragged, rather dirty, quite of a doubtful exterior to the eye of the man who lives to be respectable, but her eye saw deeper. She looked into his face—the window of his being, and was satisfied. Truth shone there from the true light and fire within. He did not fall at her feet as once before. The redeemed soul stood and looked her in the face. He put out his arms once more, and she did not draw back. She knew that he was a man, that he was true, and she was his. And he knew, in the testimony thus given him, that the last low-brooding rims of the cloud of his shame had vanished from his heaven, and that a man may have sinned and yet be glad. He could give God thanks for the shame, whose oppression had led him to understand and hate the sin. For sin gives birth to shame, and in this child-bearing is cleansed. Verily there is One, I repeat, who bringeth light out of darkness, good out of evil. It comes not of the evil, but out of the evil, because He is stronger than the evil; and He, not evil, is at the heart of the universe. Often and often yet in the course of his life, would Thomas have to be humbled, and disappointed. But not the less true was the glow of strength that now pervaded his consciousness. It was that this strength, along with a thousand other virtues, might be perfected, that the farther trials were to come. It was true, so true that it was worth making fact.

But my young reader, who delights in the emotion rather than in the being of love, will grumble at these meditations, and say, "Why don't you go on? why don't you tell us something more of their meeting?" I answer, "Because I don't choose to tell you more. There are many things, human things too, so sacred that they are better left alone. If you can not imagine them, you don't deserve to have them described." We want a little more reticence as well as a great deal more openness in the world—the pulpit included. But "against stupidity the gods themselves are powerless." Ah no! that is a heathen utterance. Let the stupid rage, and when they imagine, let it be vain things. The stupid, too, have a God that will slay their stupidity by the sword of his light. The time will come when even they will repent, not of their stupidity, for that they could not help, but of the arrogance of fancied knowledge that increased instead of diminishing it, and made them a thorn in the flesh of them that saw

and would have opened their eyes. No doubt many of them that suppose they see, fancy it only in virtue of this same stupidity; but the end will solve all. Meantime the tares and the wheat must grow together, and there are plenty of intellectual tares that spring from the root of the moral tares, and will be separated with them.

After awhile, when their feelings were a little composed, Thomas began to tell Lucy all his adventures. In the middle, however, Mrs. Boxall returned. She had most opportunely been calling on a neighbor, and if Thomas had not learned this from Mr. Kately, he would have sent for Lucy instead of going in as he did. They heard her voice in the shop.

"Don't tell grannie any thing about it yet," said Lucy. "She's much quieter in her mind now, and if we were to set her off again it would only do her harm. Any thing certain she has a right to know, but I don't think she has a right to know all that you are trying to do for her. That is your business. But you mustn't mind how she behaves to you, Tom dear. She thinks you and your father all one in the affair."

When the old lady entered she saw at a glance how things were going; but she merely gave a very marked sniff, and retreated to her chair by the window. She first seated herself, and then proceeded to take off her bonnet and shawl. But she could not keep silent long, and the beginning of speech as well as of strife is like the letting out of water.

"Thomas," she said—for people of her degree of education become more familiar in their address when they are angry—"is this room mine or yours?"

"Grannie," said Lucy, "Thomas had nothing to do with it. He was away from home, I assure you, when—when—things went wrong."

"Very convenient, no doubt, for both of you! It's nothing to you, so long as you marry him, of course. But you might have waited. The money would have been yours. But you'll have it all the sooner for marrying the man that turned your grandmother into the street. Well, well!—Only I won't sit here and see that scoundrel in my room."

She rose as she spoke, though what she would or could have done she did not know herself. It was on Lucy's lips to say to her—"The room's mine, grannie, if you come to that, and I won't have my friend turned out of it." But she thought better of it, and taking Thomas's hand led him into the shop. Thereupon grannie turned to Widdles for refuge, not from the pain of Thomas's presence, but from the shame of her own behavior, took him out of his cage, and handled him so roughly that one of the three wing feathers left on one side came off in her hand. The half of our ill-temper is often occasioned by annoyance at the other half.

Thomas and Lucy finished their talk in a low voice, hidden in the leafy forest of books. Thomas told her all about it now; how he wanted to find the man Jack Stevens, and how Robins and he had followed him to Lisbon, and found him there and brought him home; how he had had to part with her ring as well as his own watch for money to start them in their search, and how even then they had had to work their passage to Lisbon and back. But if the repre-

sentation she and Mr. Fuller had given him of the state of the case was correct, he said, there could be no doubt but Jack's testimony would reverse the previous decision, and grannie would have her own.

"I can't help being rather sorry for it," concluded Tom; "for it'll come to you then, Lucy, I suppose, and you will hardly be able to believe that it was not for my own sake that I went after Jack Stevens. I've got him safe, and Robins too, at the Mermaid. But I can't be grand and give you up. If you were as rich as Miss Coutts, I couldn't give you up—though I should like to, almost, when I think of the money and my father."

"Don't give me up, Tom, or I'll give you up, and that would be a bad job for me."

Then they made it clear to each other that nothing was farther from the intention of either of them.

"But what am I to do next, Lucy? You must tell me the lawyers that conducted your side of the case."

"I am afraid I can't ask *him* to do any thing more."

"Who's *him*, Lucy?"

"Mr. Sargent."

"Sargent—Sargent—I think I have heard the name. He's a barrister. If you are not satisfied with him, the firm you employed will speak to another."

"He did every thing, Thomas. But—"

Lucy hesitated. Thomas saw that she was blushing. Perhaps it was the consciousness of his own unworthiness that made him jealous.

"Oh, very well, Lucy! If you don't want to tell me, of course—"

"Thomas! Thomas! Can't you trust me yet? I have trusted you, Thomas."

He had the grace to feel ashamed of himself at once.

"Forgive me, Lucy!" he said. "I was wrong. Only I love you so!"

"I will tell you all about it, Tom dear."

"You shan't tell me a word about it. I can guess. But what are we to do?"

"I will go and consult Mr. Morgenstern."

"There is no time to lose."

"Come with me to his office then at once. It is not far to Old Broad Street."

They set out instantly, found Mr. Morgenstern, and put him in possession of the discovered evidence. He was delighted with the news.

"We must find Sargent at once," he said.

Lucy began to stammer out some objection.

"Oh! I know all about that, Lucy," said he.

"But this is no time for nonsense. In fact you would be doing the honest fellow a great wrong if you deprived him of the pleasure of gaining his case after all. Indeed he would feel that far more than your refusal of him. And quite right too. Sargent will be delighted. It will go far to console him, poor fellow."

"But will it be right of me to consent to it?" asked Thomas, with hesitation.

"It is a mere act of justice to him," said Mr. Morgenstern; "and, excuse me, I don't see that you have any right to bring your feelings into the matter. Besides, it will give Mrs. Boxall the opportunity of making him what return she ought. It will be a great thing for him—give him quite a start in his profession, of

which he is not a little in want. I will go to him at once," concluded Mr. Morgenstern, taking his hat.

CHAPTER LV.

GUILD COURT AGAIN.

I WILL not linger over the last of my story. Mr. Sargent was delighted at the turn affairs had taken—from a business point of view, I mean. The delight was greatly tempered by other considerations. Still he went into the matter mind and soul, if not heart and soul, and moved for a fresh trial on the ground of fresh evidence. Mr. Worboise tried the plan of throwing discredit on the witness; but the testimony of Robins and Thomas was sufficient to remove any influence that course might have had. The former judgment was rescinded, and the property was Mrs. Boxall's.

Mr. Worboise and Mr. Sargent met in the lobby. The latter, in very un-lawyer-like fashion, could not help saying—

"You would have done better to listen to reason, Mr. Worboise."

"I've fought fair, and lost, Mr. Sargent; and there's an end of it."

The chief consolation Mr. Worboise now had was that his son had come out so much more of a man than he expected, having indeed foiled him at his own game, though not with his own weapons. To this was added the expectation of the property, after all, reverting to his son; while, to tell the truth, his mind was a little easier after he was rid of it, although he did not part with it one moment before he was compelled to do so. He made no advances, however, toward a reconciliation with Thomas. Probably he thought that lay with Thomas, or at least would wait to give him an opportunity of taking the first step. My reader would doubtless have expected, as I should myself, that he would vow endless alienation from the son who had thus defeated his dearest plans, first in one direction, then in another; but somehow, as I have shown, his heart took a turn short of that North Pole of bitterness.

There is nothing to wonder at in the fact that Mrs. Boxall should know nothing yet of her happy reverse of fortune. They had, as I have said already, judged it better to keep the fresh attempt from her, so that if by any chance it should fail, she might not suffer by it, and, in any case, might be protected from the wearing of anxiety and suspense.

"Let's give grannie a surprise, Lucy," said Thomas, having hurried to her with the good news.

"How do you mean, Tom? We must be careful how we break it to her. Poor dear! she can't stand much now."

"Well, my plan will just do for that. Get Mrs. Whatsername, over the way—her old cronny, you know—to ask her to tea this evening. While she's away, Kately, Spelt, and I will get all the things back into the old place. There's nobody there, is there?"

"No; I believe not. I don't see why we shouldn't. I'll run across to the old lady, and tell

her we want grannie out of the way for an hour or two."

She took care, however, not to mention the reason, or their surprise would have been a failure.

There were no carpets to fit, for the floor had been but partially covered, showing the dark boards in the newest fashion. Before Mrs. Boxall's visit was over, the whole of her household property had been replaced—each piece in the exact position it used to occupy when they had not yet dreamed of fortune or misfortune. Just as they were getting anxious lest she should come upon the last of it, Lucy, bethinking herself, said to the book-seller—

"Mr. Kately, you must lend us Widdles. Grannie can't exist without Widdles."

"I wish you hadn't proposed it, miss; for I did mean to have all the credit of that one stroke myself. But Widdles is yours, or hers rather, for you won't care much about the old scar-amonch."

"Not care about him! He's the noblest bird in creation—that I know, Mr. Kately. He does not mind being bald even, and that's the highest summit of disregard for appearances that I know of. I'm afraid I shouldn't take it so quietly."

"I don't much matter nowadays," said Mr. Kately. "They make such wonderful wigs."

"But that's ten times worse," said Lucy.

"You don't mean to say you'd go with a bare poll, miss, so be that Providence was to serve you the same as Widdles?—which Heaven forbid!"

"I wouldn't bear a wig anyhow."

"What would you do, then, miss? Black and polish it?"

"What nonsense we are talking!" said Lucy, after a good laugh. "But I'm so happy I don't know what to do. Let's make a wig for Widdles, and grannie will think her bears' grease has made hair grow instead of feathers."

Whether this proposal was ever carried out, I do not know. But Widdles followed the furniture; and when grannie came home she found that all her things were gone. She stared. Nobody was to be seen. But all were watching from behind the defenses of Mr. Kately's book-shelves.

"Mr. Kately," she called at last, in a voice that revealed consternation.

The book-seller obeyed the summons.

"I didn't expect it of you, Mr. Kately," she said, and burst into tears.

This quite upset the conspirators. But Mr. Kately kept them back as they were hurrying forward.

"We thought we could do a little better for you, you see, ma'am. It was a confined place this for the likes of you. So Miss Lucy and I made bold to move your things up to a place in the court where you'll have more room."

She said nothing but went up stairs. In both rooms she found utter emptiness. Mr. Kately followed her.

"There's not a stick left, you see, ma'am. Come and I'll take you home."

"I didn't think you'd have turned me out in my old age, Mr. Kately. But I suppose I must go."

It was with considerable exercise of self-denial that the book-seller refrained from telling her the truth, but he could not spoil the young people's

sport. He led her up to the door of her own house.

"No, Mr. Kately. I'll never set foot in that place again. I won't accept it from no one—not even rent-free."

"But it's your own," said Kately, almost despairing of persuasion, and carried beyond his intent.

"That's just why I won't go in. It is mine, I know, but I won't have my own in charity."

"Thomas," whispered Lucy, for they were following behind, "you must tell her the good news. It will help her over her prejudice against you. Old people are hard to change, you know."

"Mrs. Boxall," said Thomas, going up to her, "this house is your own."

"Go away," returned Mrs. Boxall, energetically. "Isn't it enough that you have robbed me? Will you offer me my own in charity?"

"Do listen to me, grannie," pleaded Thomas.

"I will not listen to you. Call a cab, Lucy. We'll drive to the nearest workhouse."

Lucy saw it was time to interfere.

"What Thomas says is true, grannie, if you would only listen to him. Every thing's changed. Thomas has been over the seas to find a man who was in uncle's ship when it went down. He has given such evidence that the property is yours now."

"I don't care; it's all a trick. I don't believe he went over the seas. I won't take any thing from the villain's hand."

"Villains don't usually plot to give away what they've got," said Lucy.

"But it's Thomas Worboise you mean?"

"Yes; but he had nothing to do with it, as I've told you a hundred times, grannie. He's gone and slaved for you, and that's all the thanks you give him—to stand there on the stones, refusing to take what's your very own."

The light was slowly dawning on grannie's confused mind.

"Then you mean," she said, "that all my son Richard's money—"

"Is yours, grannie," said Lucy and Thomas in a breath.

"Only," added Lucy, "you've spoiled all our bit of fun by being so obstinate, grannie."

For sole answer the old woman gave a hand to each of them, and led them into the house, up the wide oak staircase, and along the passage into the old room, where a fire was burning cheerfully just as in the old time, and every article of furniture, book-case, piano, settle, and all, stood each in its old place, as if it had never been moved.

Mrs. Boxall sat down in her own chair, "like one that hath been stunn'd," and for some moments gave no sign of being conscious of what was going on around her. At length a little noise at her ear attracted her attention. She looked round. On the edge of the little table which had always been beside her easy-chair, stood Widdles, the long feathers of whose wings looked like arms that he had tucked under his coat-tails, only there was no coat.

"Poor Widdles!" said the old woman, and burst into tears.

CHAPTER LVI.

WOUND UP OR RUN DOWN.

THOMAS resumed his place in the office, occupying his old stool, and drawing his old salary, upon which he now supported himself in comfort and decency. He took a simple lodging in the neighborhood, and went twice a week in the evening to see his mother. In doing so he did not run much risk of meeting his father, whom he neither sought nor avoided, for he was seldom at home before midnight. His mother now lived on these visits and the expectation of them. And she began not only to love her son more and more for himself, but to respect him. Indeed, it was chiefly the respect that increased her love. If he was not converted, there must be something besides conversion that was yet good, if not so good. And she thought she might be excused if she found some pleasure even in that. It might be a weakness—it might be wrong, she thought, seeing that nothing short of absolute conversion was in the smallest degree pleasing in the sight of God; but as he was her own son, perhaps she would be excused, though certainly not justified. As Thomas's perception of truth grew, however, the conversations he had with her insensibly modified her judgment through her feelings, although she never yielded one point of her creed as far as words were concerned.

The chief aid which Thomas had in this spiritual growth, next to an honest endeavor to do the work of the day and hour, and his love to Lucy, was the instruction of Mr. Fuller. Never, when he could help it, did he fail to be present at daily prayers in St. Amos's Church. Nor did he draw upon his office hours for this purpose. The prayers fell in his dinner hour. Surely no one will judge that a quarter of an hour, though in the middle of the day, spent in seeking the presence of that Spirit whereby all actions are fitted to the just measure of their true end, was disproportioned by excess to the time spent in those outward actions of life, the whole true value of which depends upon the degree to which they are performed after the mind of that Spirit. What gave these prayers and exhortations a yet more complete fitness to his needs was their shortness. No mind could be wearied by them. I believe it very often happens that the length of the services, as they are called, is such that they actually disable the worshiper in no small degree from acting so after them as alone can make them of real worth to his being: they are a weakness and a strength, exhausting the worshiper in saying "Lord, Lord," instead of sending him forth to do his will. The more he feels, the less fit is he, and the less fitting it is, to prolong the expression of his devotion. I believe this is greatly mistaken in all public services that I know any thing about, which involve, in their length, an entire departure from good old custom, not good because old, but so good that it ought to have been older, and needs now to be raised from the dead that it may be custom once more. Thomas did not enjoy his dinner less, and did his work far more thoroughly and happily because of this daily worship and doctrine—a word which, I think, is never used by St. Paul except as meaning instruction in duty, in that which it

is right to do and that which it is right not to do, including all mental action as well as all outward behavior.

It was impossible under the influence of such instruction that Tom should ever forget the friends who had upheld him in the time of his trouble. He often saw Captain Smith, and on one occasion, when he had a fortnight's holiday—the only one before his marriage—he went a voyage to Jersey in his brig, working his passage as before, but with a very different heart inside his blue jacket. The Pottses, too, he called on now and then; and even the unamiable Jim Salter came round to confess his respect for him, when he found that he never forgot his old mates.

As soon as Thomas resumed his stool in the counting-house, Mr. Wither resigned his, and went abroad.

Mrs Boxall of course recovered her cheerfulness, but her whole character was more subdued. A certain tenderness toward Lucy appeared, which, notwithstanding all her former kindness, was entirely new. A great part of her time was spent in offices of good-will toward Widdles. She always kept her behavior to Mr. Stopper somewhat stately and distant. But he did his best for the business—for it was the best for himself.

My story leaves Mr. Spelt and Mr. Kitley each happy in a daughter, and Mattie and Poppie growing away at their own history.

One evening, when Tom was seated with his mother, who had again recovered so far as to resume her place on the couch, his father came

into the room. Tom rose. His father, without any greeting, said:

"Keep a lookout on that Stopper, Tom. Don't let him have too much of his own way."

"But I have no authority over him, father."

"Then the sooner you marry and take the business into your own hands the better."

"I'm going to be married next week."

"That's right. Make Stopper junior partner, and don't give him too large a share. Come to me to draw up the articles for you."

"Thank you, father. I will. I believe Mrs. Boxall does mean to make the business over to me."

"Of course. Good-night," returned Mr. Worboise, and left the room without speaking to his wife.

From that time Tom and his father met much as before their quarrel. Tom returned to the house for the week before his marriage, and his father made him a present of an outfit for the occasion.

"Oh, Tom! I can hardly believe it," said Lucy, when they came home from church.

"I don't deserve it," was all Tom's answer in words.

After their wedding-journey they went back to the old house in Guild Court, in which they had had one or two more rooms fitted up. Their grandmother, however, is now urging them to move to some suburb, saying she is quite willing to go with them. "And I don't believe you will have any objection either—will you, old Widdles?" she generally adds.

THE END.

THE HOUR AND THE MAN:

AN HISTORICAL ROMANCE.

By HARRIET MARTINEAU,

AUTHOR OF "DEERBROOK," &c.



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THE HOUR AND THE MAN.

CHAPTER I.

WAITING SUPPER.

THE nights of August are in St. Domingo the hottest of the year. The winds then cease to befriend the panting inhabitants; and while the thermometer stands at 90°, there is no steady breeze, as during the preceding months of summer. Light puffs of wind now and then fan the brow of the negro, and relieve for an instant the oppression of the European settler; but they are gone as soon as come, and seem only to have left the heat more intolerable than before.

Of these sultry evenings, one of the sultriest was the 22d of August, 1791. This was one of five days appointed for rejoicings in the town of Cap Français; festivities among the French and Creole inhabitants, who were as ready to rejoice on appointed occasions as the dullness of colonial life renders natural, but who would have been yet more lively than they were if the date of their festival had been in January or May. There was no choice as to the date, however. They were governed in regard to their celebrations by what happened at Paris; and never had the proceedings of the mother-country been so important to the colony as now.

During the preceding year, the white proprietors of San Domingo, who had hailed with loud voices the revolutionary doctrines before which royalty had begun to succumb in France, were astonished to find their cries of Liberty and Equality adopted by some who had no business with such ideas and words. The mulatto proprietors and merchants of the island innocently understood the words according to their commonly received meaning, and expected an equal share with the whites in the representation of the colony, in the distribution of its offices, and in the civil rights of its inhabitants generally. These rights having been denied by the whites to the free-born mulattoes, with every possible manifestation of contempt and dislike, an effort had been made to wring from the whites by force what they would not grant to reason, and an ill-principled and ill-managed revolt had taken place in the preceding October, headed by Vincent Ogé and his brother, sons of the proprietress of a coffee-plantation a few miles from Cap Français. These young men were executed under circum-

stances of great barbarity. Their sufferings were as seed sown in the warm bosoms of their companions and adherents, to spring up in due season in a harvest of vigorous revenge. The whites suspected this, and were as anxious as their dusky neighbors to obtain the friendship and sanction of the revolutionary government at home. That government was fluctuating in its principles and in its counsels; it favored now one party, and now the other; and on the arrival of its messengers at the ports of the colony, there ensued sometimes the loud boastings of the whites, and sometimes quiet, knowing smiles and whispered congratulations among the depressed section of the inhabitants.

The cruelties inflicted on Vincent Ogé had interested many influential persons in Paris in the cause of the mulattoes. Great zeal was exercised in attempting to put them in a condition to protect themselves by equal laws, and thus to restrain the tyranny of the whites. The Abbé Gregoire pleaded for them in the National Assembly; and on the 15th of March was passed the celebrated decree which gave the mulattoes the privileges of French citizens, even to the enjoyment of the suffrage, and to the possession of seats in the parochial and colonial assemblies. To Europeans there appears nothing extraordinary in the admission to these civil functions of free-born persons, many of whom were wealthy and many educated; but to the whites of St. Domingo the decree was only less tremendous than the rush of the hurricane.

It arrived at Cap Français on the 30th of June, and the tidings presently spread. At first, no one believed them but the mulattoes. When it was no longer possible to doubt; when the words of Robespierre passed from mouth to mouth, till even the nuns told them to one another in the convent garden, "Perish the colonies rather than sacrifice one iota of our principles!" the whites trampled the national cockade under their feet in the streets, countermanded their orders for the fête of the 14th of July (as they now declined taking the civic oath), and proposed to one another to offer their colony and their allegiance to England.

They found means, however, to gratify their love of power and their class-hatred by means short of treason. They tried disobedience first, as the milder method. The governor of the colony, Blanchelande, promised that, when the

decree should reach him officially, he would neglect it, and all applications from any quarter to have it enforced. This set all right. Blanchelande was pronounced a sensible and patriotic man. The gentlemen shook hands warmly with him at every turn; the ladies made deep and significant courtesies wherever they met him; the boys taught their little negroes to huzza at the name of Blanchelande; and the little girls called him a dear creature. In order to lose no time in showing that they meant to make laws for their own colony out of their own heads, and no others, the white gentry hastened on the election of deputies for a new General Colonial Assembly. The deputies were elected, and met, to the number of one hundred and seventy-six, at Léogane, in the southern region of the island, so early as the 9th of August. After exchanging greetings and vows of fidelity to their class-interests under the name of patriotism, they adjourned their assembly to the 25th, when they were to meet at Cap Français. It was desirable to hold their very important session in the most important place in the colony, the centre of intelligence, the focus of news from Europe, and the spot where they had first sympathized with the ungrateful government at home, by hoisting, with their own white hands, the cap of liberty, and shouting so that the world might hear, "Liberty and Equality!" "Down with Tyranny!"

By the 20th the deputies were congregated at Cap Français; and daily till the great 25th were they seen to confer together in coteries in the shady piazzas, or in the Jesuits' Walk, in the morning, and to dine together in parties in the afternoon, admitting friends and well-wishers to these tavern dinners. Each day till the 25th was to be a fête-day in the town and neighborhood; and of these days the hot 22d was one.

Among these friends and well-wishers were the whites upon all the plantations in the neighborhood of the town. There was scarcely an estate in the Plain du Nord, or on the mountain steep which overlooked the cape, town, and bay on all sides but the north, which did not furnish guests to these dinners. The proprietors, their bailiffs, the clergy, the magistrates, might all be seen along the roads in the cool of the morning; and there was a holiday air about the estates they left behind. The negroes were left for this week to do their work pretty much as they liked, or to do none at all. There was little time to think of them and of ordinary business, when there were the mulattoes to be ostentatiously insulted, and the mother-country to be defied. So the negroes slept at noon and danced at night during these few August days, and even had leave to visit one another to as great an extent as was ever allowed. Perhaps they also transacted other affairs of which their masters had little suspicion.

All that ever was allowed was permitted to the slaves on the Breda estate, in the plain, a few miles from Cap Français. The attorney

or bailiff of the estate, M. Bayou de Libertas, was a kind-hearted man, who, while insisting very peremptorily on his political and social rights, and vehemently denouncing all abstract enmity to them, liked that people actually about him should have their own way. While ransacking his brain for terms of abuse to vent on Lafayette and Condorcet, he rarely found any thing harsh to utter when Caton got drunk and spoiled his dinner; when Venus sent up his linen darker than it went down to the quarter; or when little Machabée picked his pocket of small coin. Such a man was, of course, particularly busy this week; and, of course, the slaves under his charge were particularly idle, and particularly likely to have friends from other plantations to visit them.

Some such visitor seemed to be expected by a family of these Breda negroes on the Monday evening, the 22d. This family did not live in the slave-quarter. They had a cottage near the stables, as Toussaint Breda had been M. Bayou's postilion; and, when he was lately promoted to be overseer, it was found convenient to all parties that he should retain his dwelling, which had been enlarged and adorned so as to accord with the dignity of his new office. In the piazza of his dwelling sat Toussaint this evening, evidently waiting for some one to arrive; for he frequently put down his book to listen for footsteps, and more than once walked round the house to look abroad. His wife, who was within cooking supper, and his daughter and little boy, who were beside him in the piazza, observed his restlessness; for Toussaint was a great reader, and seldom looked off the page for a moment of any spare hour that he might have for reading either the books M. Bayou lent him, or the three or four volumes which he had been permitted to purchase for himself.

"Do you see Jean?" asked the wife from within. "Shall we wait supper for him?"

"Wait a little longer," said Toussaint. "It will be strange if he does not come."

"Are any more of Latour's people coming with Jean, mother?" asked Génifrède from the piazza.

"No; they have a supper at Latour's to-night; and we should not have thought of inviting Jean, but that he wants some conversation with your father."

"Lift me up," cried the little boy, who was trying in vain to scramble up one of the posts of the piazza, in order to reach a hummingbird's nest which hung in the tendrils of a creeper overhead, and which a light puff of wind now set swinging, so as to attract the child's eye. What child ever saw a hummingbird thus rocking, its bill sticking out like a long needle on one side, and its tail at the other, without longing to clutch it? So Denis cried out imperiously to be lifted up. His father set him on the shelf within the piazza, where the calabashes were kept: a station whence he could see into the nest and watch the bird, without be-

ing able to touch it. This was not altogether satisfactory. The little fellow looked about him for a calabash to throw at the nest; but his mother had carried in all her cups for the service of the supper-table. As no more wind came at his call, he could only blow with all his might, to swing the tendrils again; and he was amusing himself thus when his father laid down his book, and stepped out to see once more whether Jean was approaching.

"Lift me down," said the boy to his sister, when his head was giddy with blowing. Génifrède would fain have let him stay where he was, out of the way of mischief; but she saw that he was really afraid of falling, and she offered her shoulders for him to descend upon. When down, she would not let him touch her work; she took her scissors from his busy hands, and shook him off when he tried to pull the snowberries out of her hair; so that there was nothing left for the child to play with but his father's book. He was turning it over when Toussaint re-appeared.

"Ha! boy! a book in your hands already! I hope you may have as much comfort out of that book as I have had, Denis."

"What is it? what is it about?" said the boy, who had heard many a story out of books from his father.

"What is it? Let us see. I think you know letters enough to spell it out for yourself. Come and try."

The child knew the letter E, and, with a good deal of help, made out, at last, Epictetus.

"What is that?" asked the boy.

"Epictetus was a negro," said Génifrède, complacently.

"Not a negro," said her father, smiling.

"He was a slave, but he was a white."

"Is that the reason you read that book so much more than any other?"

"Partly; but partly because I like what is in it."

"What is in it—any stories?" asked Denis.

"It is all about bearing and forbearing. It has taught me many things which you will have to learn by-and-by. I shall teach you some of them out of this book."

Denis made all haste away from the promised instruction, and his father was presently again absorbed in his book. From respect to him, Génifrède kept Denis quiet by signs of admonition; and for some little time nothing was heard but the sounds that in the plains of San Domingo never cease—the humming and buzzing of myriads of insects, the occasional chattering of monkeys in a neighboring wood, and, with a passing gust, a chorus of frogs from a distant swamp. Unconscious of this din, from being accustomed always to hear more or less of it, the boy amused himself with chasing the fire-flies, whose light began to glance around as darkness descended. His sister was poring over her work, which she was just finishing, when a gleam of greenish light made both look up. It came from a large meteor which sailed

past toward the mountain, whither were tending also the huge masses of cloud which gather about the high peaks previous to the season of rain and hurricanes. There was nothing surprising in this meteor, for the sky was full of them in August nights; but it was very beautiful. The globe of green light floated on till it burst above the mountains, illuminating the lower clouds, and revealing along the slopes of the uplands the coffee-groves, waving and bowing their heads in the wandering winds of that high region. Génifrède shivered at the sight, and her brother threw himself upon her lap. Before he had asked half his questions about the lights of the sky, the short twilight was gone, and the evening star cast a faint shadow from the tufted posts of the piazza upon the white wall of the cottage. In a low tone, full of awe, Génifrède told the boy such stories as she had heard from her father of the mysteries of the heavens. He felt that she trembled as she told of the Northern Lights which had been actually seen by some traveled persons now in Cap Français. It took some time and argument to give him an idea of cold countries; but his uncle Paul, the fisherman, had seen hail on the coast only thirty miles from hence; and this was a great step in the evidence. Denis listened with all due belief to his sister's description of those pale lights shooting up over the sky, till he cried out vehemently, "There they are! look!"

Génifrède screamed, and covered her face with her hands; while the boy shouted to his father, and ran to call his mother to see the lights.

What they saw, however, was little like the pale, cold rays of the aurora borealis. It was a fiery red, which, shining to some height in the air, was covered in by a canopy of smoke.

"Look up, Génifrède," said her father, laying his hand upon her head. "It is a fire—a cane-field on fire."

"And houses too—the sugar-house, no doubt," said Margot, who had come out to look. "It burns too red to be canes only. Can it be at Latour's? That would keep Jean from coming. It was the best supper I ever got ready for him."

"Latour's is over that way," said Toussaint, pointing some distance farther to the south-east. "But see! There is fire there too! God have mercy!"

He was silent, in mournful fear that he knew now too well the reason why Jean had not come, and the nature of the conversation Jean had desired to have with him. As he stood with folded arms, looking from one conflagration to the other, Génifrède clung to him, trembling with terror. In a quarter of an hour another blaze appeared on the horizon; and, soon after, a fourth.

"The sky is on fire!" cried Denis, in more delight than fear. "Look at the clouds!" And the clouds did indeed show, throughout their huge pile, some a mild flame-color, and others

a hard crimson edge, as during a stormy sunset.

"Alas! alas! this is rebellion," said Toussaint; "rebellion against God and man. God have mercy! The whites have risen against their king, and now the blacks rise against them in turn. It is a great sin. God have mercy!"

Margot wept bitterly. "Oh, what shall we do?" she cried. "What will become of us, if there is a rebellion?"

"Be cheerful and fear nothing," replied her husband. "I have not rebelled, and I shall not. M. Bayou has taught me to bear and forbear; yes, my boy, as this book says, and as the Book of God says. We will be faithful and fear nothing."

"But they may burn this plantation," cried Margot. "They may come here and take you away. They may ruin M. Bayou: and then we may be sold away: we may be parted—"

Her grief choked her words.

"Fear nothing," said her husband, with calm authority. "We are in God's hand, and it is a sin to fear his will. But see! there is another fire, over toward the town."

And he called aloud the name of his eldest son, saying he should send the boy with a horse to meet his master. He himself must remain to watch at home.

Placide did not come when called, nor was he at the stables. He was gone some way off, to cut fresh grass for the cattle—a common night labor on the plantation.

"Call Isaac, then," said Toussaint.

"Run, Génifrède," said her mother. "Isaac and Aimée are in the wood. Run, Génifrède."

Génifrède did not obey. She was too much terrified to leave the piazza alone; though her father gently asked when she, his eldest daughter, and almost a woman, would leave off being scared on all occasions like a child. Margot went herself; so far infected with her daughter's fears as to be glad to take little Denis in her hand. She was not long gone. As soon as she entered the wood, she heard the sound of her children's laughter above the noise the monkeys made; and she was guided by it to the well. There, in the midst of the opening which let in the starlight, stood the well, surrounded by the only grass on the Breda estate that was always fresh and green; and there were Isaac and his inseparable companion Aimée, making the grass greener by splashing each other with more than half the water they drew. Their bright eyes and teeth could be seen by the mild light, as they were too busy with their sport to heed their mother as she approached. She soon made them serious with her news. Isaac flew to help his father with the horses, while Aimée, a stout girl of twelve, assisted her mother in earnest to draw water and carry it home.

They found Génifrède crouching alone in a corner of the piazza. In another minute Toussaint appeared on horseback, leading a saddled horse.

"I am going for M. Bayou myself," said he; adding, as he glanced round the lurid horizon, "it is not a night for boys to be abroad. I shall be back in an hour. If M. Bayou comes by the new road, tell him that I am gone by Madame Oge's. If fire breaks out here, go into the wood. If I meet Placide, I will send him home."

He disappeared under the limes in the avenue; and his family heard the pace of the horses quicken into a gallop before the sound died away upon the road.

CHAPTER II.

THE EXCLUSIVES.

THE party of deputies with whom M. Bayou was dining were assembled at the great hotel, at the corner of Place Mont Archer, at Cap Français. Languidly though gladly did the guests, especially those from the country, enter the hotel, overpowering as was the heat of the roads and the streets. In the roads the sands lay so deep that the progress of horsemen was necessarily slow, while the sun seemed to shed down a deluge of flame. In the streets there was the shelter of the piazzas; but their pillars, if accidentally touched, seemed to burn the hand; and the hum of traffic and the sound of feet appeared to increase the oppression caused by the weather. Within the hotel all was comparatively cool and quiet. The dining and drawing rooms occupied by the guests adjoined each other, and presented none but the most welcome images. The jalousies were nearly closed; and through the small spaces that were left open there might be seen in one direction the fountain playing in the middle of the Place, and in the other, diagonally across the Rue Espagnole, the Jesuits' Walk, an oblong square laid down in grass, and shaded in the midst by an avenue of palms. Immediately opposite the hotel was the Convent of Religieuses, over whose garden wall more trees were seen; so that the guests might easily have forgotten that they were in the midst of a town.

The rooms were so dark that those who entered from the glare of the streets could at first see nothing. The floor was dark, being of native mahogany, polished like a looking-glass. The walls were green, the furniture green—every thing ordered in counteraction of light and heat. In the dining-room more was visible; there was the white cloth, spread over the long range of tables, and the plate and glass, glittering in such light as was allowed to enter; and also the gilded balustrade of the gallery, to be used to-day as an orchestra. This gallery was canopied over, as was the seat of the chairman, with palm branches and evergreens, intermixed with fragrant shrubs, and flowers of all hues. A huge bunch of peacocks' feathers was suspended from the lofty ceiling; and it was waved incessantly to and fro, by strings

pulled by two little negroes, at opposite corners of the room, causing a continual fanning of the air, and circulation of the perfumes of the flowers. The black band in the orchestra summoned the company to dinner, and entertained them while at it by playing the popular revolutionary airs which were then resounding through the colony like the hum of its insects or the dash of its water-falls. As they took their seats to the air of the "Marseillaise Hymn," more than one of the guests might be heard by his next neighbor singing to himself,

"Allons, enfans de la patrie,
Le jour de gloire est arrive."

Before politics, however, there was dinner to be attended to; and the first-fruits of the eloquence of the meeting was bestowed on the delicate turtle, the well-fatted land-crabs, and the rich pasties; on the cold wines, the refreshing jellies, and the piles of oranges, figs, and almonds, pomegranates, melons, and pine-apples. The first vote of compliment was to Henri, the black cook from St. Christophe, whence he had been brought over by the discerning hotel-keeper, who detected his culinary genius while Henri was yet but a lad. When the table was cleared, a request was sent up to the chairman from various parties at the table, that he would command Henri's attendance, to receive the testimony of the company respecting the dinner he had sent up, and to take a glass of wine from them.

Dr. Proteau, the chairman, smilingly agreed, saying that such a tribute was no more than Henri's professional excellence and high reputation deserved; and Henri was accordingly summoned by a dozen of the grinning black waiters, who ran over one another in their haste to carry to the kitchen the message of these, the highest gentry of the land. The waiters presently poured into the room again, and stood in two rows from the door, where Henri appeared, not laughing like the rest, but perfectly grave, as he stood, white apron on and napkin over his arm, his stout and tall figure erect, to receive the commands of his masters.

"Was your father a cook or a gourmand, Henri? Or are you all good cooks at St. Christophe?" asked a deputy.

"If it is the air at St. Christophe that makes men such cooks as Henri, the knights of St. John of Malta had a goodly gift in it," said another.

"Can one get such another as you for money, Henri?" asked a third.

"How many boys has your wife brought you, Henri? We shall bid high for them, and make your master's fortune, if he trains them all to your profession," said a fourth.

"Tell your master he had better not part with you for any sum, Henri. We will make it worth his while to refuse more for you than was ever offered yet."

"Your health, Henri! May you live out all the turtle now in St. Domingo, and the next generation after them."

Amidst all these questions and remarks, Henri escaped answering any. He stood looking on the ground till a glass of Champagne was brought to him, bowed to the company, drank it off, and was gone.

"How demure the fellow looks!" said M. Papalier, a planter, to Bayou, his neighbor in the plain, who now sat opposite to him; "what an air of infinite modesty he put on! At this moment, I dare say, he is snapping his fingers, and telling the women that all the money in St. Domingo won't buy him."

"You are mistaken there," said Bayou. "He is a singular fellow, is Henri, in more ways than his cookery. I believe he never snapped his fingers in his life, nor told any body what his master gave for him. I happen to know Henri very well, from his being an acquaintance of my overseer, who is something of the same sort, only superior even to Henri."

"The fellow looked as if he would have given a great deal more than his glass of wine to have staid out of the room," observed M. Leroy. "He has nothing of the mulatto in him, has he? Pure African, I suppose."

"Pure African: all safe," replied Bayou. "But observe! the music has stopped, and we are going on to the business of the day. Silence, there! Silence all!"

Every body said "Silence!" and Dr. Proteau rose.

He declared himself to be in a most remarkable situation; one in which he was sure every Frenchman present would sympathize with him. Here he stood, chairman of a meeting of the most loyal, the most spirited, the most patriotic citizens of the empire; chairman of an assemblage of members of a colonial parliament, and their guests and friends; here he stood, in this capacity, and yet he was unable to propose any one of the loyal toasts by which it had, till now, been customary to sanction their social festivities. As for the toast, now never more to be heard from their lips—the health of the king and royal family—the less that was said about that the better. The times of oppression were passing away; and he, for one, would not dim the brightness of the present meeting, by recalling from the horizon, where it was just disappearing, the tempest-cloud of tyranny to overshadow the young sunshine of freedom. There had been, however, another toast, to which they had been wont to respond with more enthusiasm than was ever won by despotic monarchy from its slaves. There had been a toast to which this lofty roof had rung again, and to hail which every voice had been loud, and every heart had beat high. Neither could he now propose that toast. With grief which consumed his soul, he was compelled to bury in silence—the silence of mortification, the silence of contempt, the silence of detestation—the name of the National Assembly of France. His language might appear strong; but it was mild, it was moderate; it was, he might almost say, cringing, in comparison with what the National As-

sembly had deserved. He need not occupy the time of his friends, nor harrow their feelings, by a narrative of the injuries their colony had sustained at the hands of the French National Assembly. Those around him knew too well, that in return for their sympathy in the humbling of a despot, for their zeal in behalf of the eternal principles of freedom, the mother-country had, through the instrumentality of its National Council, endeavored to strip its faithful whites in this colony of the power which they had always possessed, and which was essential to their very existence in their ancient prosperity—the exclusive power of making or enforcing laws for their own community. The attempt was now made, as they too well knew, to wrest this sacred privilege from their hands, by admitting to share it a degraded race, before whose inroads would perish all that was most dear to his fellow-citizens and to himself—the repose of their homes, the security of their property, the honor of their color, and the prosperity of the colony. He rejoiced to see around him, and from his heart he bade them welcome, some fellow-laborers with himself in the glorious work of resisting oppression and defending their ancient privileges, endeared to them by as many ages as had passed since distinctions of color were made by an Almighty hand. He invited them to pledge themselves with him to denounce and resist such profane, such blasphemous innovations, proposed by shallow enthusiasts, seconded by designing knaves, and destined to be wrought out by the agency of demons—demons in human form. He called upon all patriots to join him in his pledge; and, in token of their faith, to drink deep to one now more deserving of their homage than was ever king or National Assembly—he need not say that he alluded to the noblest patriot in the colony—its guardian, its savior—Governor Blanchelande.

The gentleman who rose, amidst the cheers and jingling of glasses, to say a few words to this toast, was a man of some importance in the colony as a member of its assembly, though he otherwise held no higher rank than that of attorney to the estate of M. Gallifet, a rich absentee. Odeluc was an old resident, and (though zealous for the privileges of the whites) a favorite with men of all colors, and therefore entitled to be listened to by all with attention, when he spoke on the conflicting interests of races. However his opinions might please or displease, all liked to look upon his bright countenance and to hear his lively voice. Vincent Ogé had said that Odeluc was a worse foe to the mulattoes than many a worse man: he always so excited their good-will as to make them forget their rights.

As he now rose, the air from the peacock-fan stirring the white hair upon his forehead (for in the heats of St. Domingo it was permitted to lay wigs aside), and the good wine animating yet further the spirit of his lively countenance, Odeluc was received with a murmur of welcome before he opened his lips to speak.

“I must acknowledge, my fellow-citizens,” said he, “I never was more satisfied with regard to the state of our colony than now. We have had our troubles, to be sure, like the mother-country, and like all countries where portions of the people struggle for power which they ought not to have. But we have settled that matter for ourselves, by the help of our good governor, and I firmly believe that we are at the commencement of a long age of peace.”

Here some applauded, while two or three shook their heads. Odeluc continued,

“I see some of my friends do not altogether share my hopes. Yet are these hopes not reasonable? The governor has himself assured me that nothing shall induce him to notice the obnoxious decree till he has, in the first place, received it under all the official forms; in the next place, written his remonstrance to the Government at home; and, in the third place, received an answer. Now all this will take some time. In three days we deputies shall begin our session; and never were the members of any assembly more united in their will and in their views, and therefore more powerful. We meet for the express purpose of neutralizing the effects of this ill-judged decree; we have the power, we have the will, and who can doubt the results? The management of this colony has always succeeded well in the hands of the whites; they have made its laws and enforced them; they have allowed the people of color liberty to pursue their own business, and acquire property if they could, conscious of strength to restrain their excesses if occasion should arise: and as for the negro population, where in the world were affairs ever on a better footing than the masters and their force than in the colony of St. Domingo? If all has worked so well hitherto, is it to be supposed that an ignorant shout in the National Assembly, and a piece of paper sent over to us thence, can destroy the harmony and overthrow the prosperity which years have confirmed? I, for one, will never believe it. I see before me, in my colleagues, men to whom the tranquillity of the colony may be safely confided; and over their heads, and beyond the wise laws they are about to pass for the benefit of both the supreme and subordinate interests of our community, I see, stretching beyond the reach of living eye, a scene of calm and fruitful prosperity, in which our children's children may enjoy their lives without a thought of fear or apprehension of change. Regarding Governor Blanchelande as one of the chief securities of this our long tenure of social prosperity, I beg to propose, not only that we shall now drink his health, but that we shall meet annually in his honor on this day. Yonder is the Government-house. If we open our jealousies wide enough, and give the honors loud enough, perhaps our voices may reach his ears, as the loyal greeting that he deserves.”

“Do not you smell smoke?” asked Bayou of his neighbor, as the blinds were thrown open.

"What a smell of burning!" observed the chairman to Odeluc at the same moment.

"They are burning field-trash outside the town, no doubt," Odeluc answered. "We choose the nights when there is little wind, you know, for that work."

There was a small muster of soldiers round the gates of the Government-house, and several people in the streets, when the honors were given to the governor's name. But the first seemed not to hear, and the others did not turn their heads. The air that came in was so hot that the blinds were immediately ordered to be closed again. The waiters, however, seemed to have lost their obsequiousness, and many orders and oaths were spent upon them before they did their duty.

While the other gentlemen sat down, a young man remained standing, his eyes flashing, and his countenance heated, either by wine or by the thoughts with which he seemed big.

"My fellow-citizens," said M. Brelle, beginning in a very loud voice, "agreeing, as I do, in my hopes for this colony with M. Odeluc, and, like him, trusting in the protection and blessing of a just Providence, which will preserve our rights and chastise those who would infringe them; feeling thus, and thus trusting, there is a duty for me to perform. My friends, we must not permit the righteous chastisements of Providence to pass by unheeded and be forgotten. The finger of Providence has been among us, to mark out and punish the guilty disturber of our peace. But, though dead, that guilty traitor has not ceased to disturb our peace. Do we not know that his groans have moved our enemies in the National Assembly? that his ashes have been stirred up there, to shed their poison over our names? It becomes us, in gratitude to a preserving Providence; in fidelity to that which is dearer to us than life—our fair fame; in regard to the welfare of our posterity, it becomes us to mark our reprobation of treason and rebellion, and to perpetuate in ignominy the name of the rebel and the traitor. Fill your glasses, then, gentlemen, and drink—drink deep with me, Our curse on the memory of Vincent Ogé!"

Several members of the company eagerly filled their glasses; others looked doubtfully toward the chair. Before Dr. Proteau seemed to have made up his mind what to do, M. Papalier had risen, saying, in a rather low and conversational tone,

"My young friend will allow me to suggest to him the expediency of withdrawing his toast, as one in which his fellow-citizens can not all cordially join. We all unite, doubtless, in reprobating treason, and rebellion in the person of Ogé; but I, for one, can not think it good, either in taste or in policy, to curse the memory of the dead in the hearing of those who desire mercy for their fallen enemies (as some here present do), or of others who look upon Ogé as no criminal, but a martyr; which is, I fear, the case with too many outside." He pointed to

the windows as he spoke, where it now appeared that the jalousies had been pushed a little open, so as to allow opportunity for some observation from without. M. Papalier lowered his tone, so as to be heard, during the rest of his speech, only by those who made every effort to catch his words. Not a syllable could be heard in the orchestra outside, or even by the waiters ranged against the wall; and the chairman and others at the extremities of the table were obliged to lean forward to catch the meaning of the speaker, who proceeded:

"No one more heartily admires the spirit and good-humor of our friend, M. Odeluc, than myself: no one more enjoys being animated by the hilarity of his temper, and carried away by the hopeful enthusiasm which makes him the dispenser of happiness that he is. But I can not always sympathize in his bright anticipations. I own I can not to-day. He may be right. God grant he be so! But I can not take M. Odeluc's word for it, when words so different are spoken elsewhere. There are observers at a distance—impartial lookers-on, who predict (and I fear there are signs at home which indicate) that our position is far from secure, our prospects far other than serene. There are those who believe that we are in danger from other foes than the race of Ogé: and facts have arisen—but enough. This is not the time and place for discussion of that point. Suffice it now that, as we all know, observers at a distance can often see deeper and farther than those involved in affairs; and that Mirabeau has said—and what Mirabeau says is at least worth attention—Mirabeau has said of us, in connection with the events of last October, 'They are sleeping on the margin of Vesuvius, and the first jets of the volcano are not sufficient to awaken them.' In compliment to Mirabeau," he concluded, smiling, and bowing to M. Brelle, "if not in sympathy with what he may think my needless caution, I hope my young friend will reserve his wine for the next toast."

M. Brelle bowed rather sulkily. No one seemed ready at the moment to start a new subject. Some attacked M. Papalier in whispers for what he had said; and he, to defend himself, told, also in whispers, facts of the murder of a bailiff on an estate near his own, and of suspicious circumstances attending it, which made him and others apprehend that all was not right among the negroes. His facts and surmises went round. As, in the eagerness of conversation, a few words were occasionally spoken aloud, some of the party glanced about to see if the waiters were within earshot. They were not. There was not a negro in the apartment. The band had gone out unnoticed—to refresh themselves, no doubt.

Odeluc took the brief opportunity to state his confidence that all doubts of the fidelity of the negroes were groundless. He agreed with M. Papalier that the present was not the time and place for entering at large into the subject. He would only just say that he was now an old

man; that he had spent his life among the people alluded to; and knew them well, if any man did. They were revengeful, certainly, upon occasion, if harshly treated; but otherwise, and if not corrupted by ignorant demagogues and designing agents, they were the most tractable and attached people on earth. He was confident that the masters in St. Domingo had nothing to fear.

He was proceeding; but he perceived that the band was re-entering the orchestra, and he sat down abruptly.

The chairman now discovered that it had grown very dark, and called out for lights. His orders were echoed by several of the party, who hoped that the lights would revive some of the spirit of the evening, which had become very flat.

While waiting for lights, the jalousies were once more opened by orders from the chair. The apartment was instantly pervaded by a dull, changeful red light, derived from the sky, which glowed above the trees of the Jesuits' Walk with the reflection of extensive fires. The guests were rather startled, too, by perceiving that the piazza was crowded with heads; and that dusky faces, in countless number, were looking in upon them, and had probably been watching them for some time past. With the occasional puffs of wind, which brought the smell of burning, came a confused murmur, from a distance, as of voices, the tramp of many horses in the sand, and a multitude of feet in the streets. This was immediately lost in louder sounds. The band struck up, unbidden, with all its power, the Marseillaise Hymn; and every voice in the piazza, and, by degrees, along the neighboring streets and squares, seemed to join in singing the familiar words,

"Allons, enfans de la patrie,
Le jour de gloire est arrivé."

The consternation of the deputies and their guests was extreme. Every man showed his terror in his own way; but one act was universal. Each one produced arms of one sort or another. Even Odeluc, it appeared, had not come unarmed. While they were yet standing in groups about the table, the door burst open, and a negro, covered with dust and panting with haste, ran in and made for the head of the table, thrusting himself freely through the parties of gentlemen. The chairman, at sight of the man, turned pale, recoiled for a moment, and then, swearing a deep oath, drew the short sword he wore, and ran the negro through the body.

"Oh master!" cried the poor creature, as his life ebbed out in the blood which inundated the floor.

The act was not seen by those outside, as there was a screen of persons standing between the tables and the windows. To this accident it was probably owing that the party survived that hour, and that any order was preserved in the town.

"Shame, Proteau! shame!" said Odeluc, as he bent down, and saw that the negro was dying. Papatier, Bayou, and a few more cried "Shame!" also, while others applauded.

"I will defend my deed," said Proteau, struggling with the hoarseness of his voice, and pouring out a glass of wine to clear his throat. His hand was none of the steadiest as he did so. "Hush that band! There is no hearing one's self speak. Hush! I say; stop!" and, swearing, he passionately shook his fist at the musicians, who were still making the air of the Marseillaise peal through the room. They instantly stopped and departed.

"There! you have sent them out to tell what you have done," observed a deputy.

"I will defend my deed," Proteau repeated, when he had swallowed the wine. "I am confident the negroes have risen. I am confident the fellow came with bad intent."

"No fear but the negroes will rise anywhere in the world, where they have such as you for masters," said Odeluc.

"What do you mean, sir?" cried Proteau, laying his hand on the hilt of his dripping sword.

"I mean what I say. And I will tell you, too, what I do not mean. I do not mean to fight to-night with any white, and, least of all, with one who is standing in a pool of innocent blood of his own shedding." And he pointed to Proteau's feet, which were, indeed, soaked with the blood of his slave.

"Hush! hush! gentlemen!" cried several voices. "Here is more news!"

"Hide the body!" said Bayou; and, as he spoke, he stooped to lift it. M. Brelle made shorter work. He rolled it over with his foot, and kicked it under the table. It was out of sight before the master of the hotel entered, followed by several negroes from the plain, to say that the "force" had risen on several plantations, had dismantled the mills, burned the sugar-houses, set fire to the crops, murdered the overseers, and, he feared, in some cases, the proprietors.

"Where?" "Whose estates?" "What proprietors?" asked every voice present.

"Where did it begin?" was the question the landlord applied himself first to answer.

"It broke out on the Noé estate, sir. They murdered the refiner and his apprentice, and carried off the surgeon. They left another young man for dead, but he got away, and told the people on the next plantation; but it was too late then. They had reached M. Clement's by that time, and raised his people. They say M. Clement is killed; but some of his family escaped. They are here in the town, I believe."

Some of the deputies now snatched their hats, and went out to learn where the fugitives were, and thus to get information, if possible, at first hand.

"All is safe in our quarter at present, I trust," said Papatier to Bayou; "but shall we be gone?"

Your horse is here, I suppose. We can ride together."

"In a moment. Let us hear all we can first," replied Bayou.

"Do you stay for that purpose, then, and look to our horses. I will learn what the governor's orders are, and come here for you presently;" and Papalier was gone.

When Bayou turned to listen again, Odeluc was saying,

"Impossible! incredible! Gallifet's force risen! Not they! They would be firm if the world were crushed flat. Why, they love me as if I were their father!"

"Nevertheless, sir, you owe your safety to being my guest," said the landlord, with a bow as polite as on the most festive occasion. "I am happy that my roof should—"

"Who brought this report?" cried Odeluc. "Who can give news of Gallifet's negroes?" And he looked among the black faces which were clustered behind the landlord. No one spoke thence; but a voice from the piazza said,

"Gallifet's force has risen. The canes are all on fire."

"I will bring them to their senses," said Odeluc, with sudden quietness. "I have power over them. The governor will give me a handful of men from the town-guard, and we shall set things straight before morning. The poor fellows have been carried away while I was not there to stand by them, but making speeches here, like a holiday fool. I will bring them to their senses presently. Make way, friends, make way."

And Odeluc stepped out among the blacks on the piazza, that being the shortest way to the Government-house.

"I hope he is not too confident," whispered a town deputy to a friend from the south; "but this is bad news. Gallifet's plantation is the largest in the plain, and only eight miles off."

A sort of scream, a cry of horror, from one who stood close by, stopped the deputy.

"Boirien! what is the matter?" cried the deputy, as Boirien hid his face with his arms upon the table, and a strong shudder shook his whole frame.

"Do not speak to him! I will tell you," said another. "Oh, this is horrible! They have murdered his brother-in-law on Flaville's estate, and carried off his sister and her three daughters into the woods. Something must be done directly. Boirien, my poor fellow, I am going to the governor. Soldiers shall be sent to bring your sister into the town. We shall have her here before morning; and you must bring her and her family to my house."

No one could endure to stay to hear more. Some went to learn elsewhere the fate of those in whom they were interested. Some went to offer their services to the governor; some to barricade their own houses in the town; some to see whether it was yet possible to intrench their plantations. Some declared their intention of conveying the ladies of their families to

the convent; the place always hitherto esteemed safe, amidst all commotions. It soon appeared, however, that this was not the opinion of the sisters themselves on the present occasion, nor of the authorities of the town; for the muffled nuns were seen hurrying down to the quay, under the protection of soldiers, in order to take refuge on board the vessels in the bay. All night long boats were plying in the harbor, conveying women, children, plate, and money on board the ships which happened to be in the roads.

The landlord would have been glad of the help of any of his guests in clearing his house; but they had no sympathy to spare; no time to think of his plate and wines. As the whites disappeared from the room, the blacks poured in. They allowed the landlord to sweep away his plate, but they laid hands on the wines; and many a smart speech, many a light laugh, resounded within those walls till morning, while consternation reigned without. When these thoughtless creatures sauntered to their several homes in the sunrise, they found that such of their fellow-servants as they had been accustomed to look up to, as abler and more trusted than themselves, had disappeared, and no one would tell whither they were gone—only that they were quite safe.

When M. Papalier returned to the hotel from his cruise for information, he found his neighbor Bayou impatiently waiting on horseback, while Henri, still in his white apron, was holding the other horse.

"Here, sir; mount, and let us be off," cried Bayou. "We owe it to my friend Henri, here, that we have our horses. The gentlemen from the country very naturally took the first that came to hand to get home upon. They say Leroy is gone home on a dray-mule. I rather expect to meet Toussaint on the road. If he sees the fires, he will be coming to look after me."

"He can not well help seeing the fires," replied Papalier. "They are climbing up the mountain side, all the way along the Haut du Cap. We shall be singed like two porkers if we do not ride like two devils; and then we shall be lucky if we do not meet two thousand devils by the way."

"Do you suppose the road is safe, Henri?" asked Bayou. "I know you will tell me the truth."

"Indeed, master, I know nothing," replied Henri. "You say you shall meet Toussaint. I will ride with you till you meet him, if you will. Our people all know him and me."

"Do so, Henri. Do not wait to look for another horse. Jump up behind me. Mine is a strong beast, and will make no difficulty even of your weight. Never mind your apron. Keep it for a flag of truce in case we meet the enemy."

They were off, and presently emerged from the comparative darkness of the streets into the light of the fires. None of the three spoke,

except to urge on the horses up the steep, sandy road, which first presented an ascent from the town, and then a descent to the plain, before it assumed the level which it then preserved to the foot of the opposite mountains, nearly fifty miles off. No one appeared on the road; and the horsemen had, therefore, leisure to cast glances behind them as they were slowly carried up the ascent. The alarm-bell was now sending its sullen sounds of dismay far and wide in the air, whose stillness was becoming more and more disturbed by the draughts of the spreading fires, as the canes caught, like torches, up the slopes to the right. Pale, twinkling lights, sprinkled over the cape and the harbor—lights which looked like glow-worm tapers amidst the fiery atmosphere—showed that every one was awake and stirring in the town and on board the ships; while an occasional rocket, mounting in the smoky air from either the Barracks or Government-house, showed that it was the intention of the authorities to intimate to the inhabitants of the remoter districts of the plain that the Government was on the alert, and providing for the public safety.

On surmounting the ridge, Henri stretched out his hand, and pulled the bridle of M. Bayou's horse to the left, so as to turn it into a narrow green track which here parted from the road.

"What now, sir?" cried Papalier, in a tone of suspicion, checking his horse instead of following.

"You may, perhaps, meet two thousand devils if you keep the high-road to the plain," answered Henri, quietly. To M. Bayou he explained that Toussaint would probably choose this road, through Madame Ogé's plantation.

"Come on, Papalier; do not lose time. All is right enough," said Bayou. "The grass-tracks are the safest to-night, depend upon it."

Papalier followed in discontented silence. In a few moments Henri again pulled the bridle—a decided check this time—stopping the horse.

"Voices," he whispered. Bayou could hear none. In a moment Henri continued,

"It is Toussaint. I thought we should meet him hereabout."

The next turn of the path brought them upon Toussaint, who was advancing with the led horse from Breda. Not far behind him was Madame Ogé's house, the door standing wide, and, seen by the light within, a woman in the door-way. Toussaint pulled up. Henri leaped down, and ran to shake hands with his friend. Papalier took the opportunity to say, in a low voice, to Bayou,

"You must send your fellow there on board ship. You must, there is no doubt of it. The governor, and all the householders in Cap, are doing so with their cleverest negroes; and, if there is a clever one in the colony, it is Toussaint."

"I shall do no such thing," said Bayou. "I have trusted Toussaint for these thirty years,

and I shall not distrust him now—now, when we most need those we can best confide in."

"That is exactly what M. Clement said of his postilion; and it was his postilion that struck him to the heart. You must send Toussaint on board ship; and I will tell you how—"

Papalier stopped, perceiving that the two negroes were not talking, but had their eyes fixed on him.

"What is that?" said Henri. "Is Toussaint to go on board ship?"

"No, no, nonsense," said Bayou; "I am not going to send any body on board ship. All quiet at Breda, I suppose, Toussaint?"

"All quiet, sir, at present. M. Papalier, on board ship I will not go."

"As your master pleases. It is no concern of mine, Toussaint," said Papalier.

"So I think," replied Toussaint.

"You see your faithful hands, your very obedient friends, have got a will of their own already," whispered Papalier to Bayou, as they set their horses forward again; Henri turning homeward on the tired horse which had carried double, and Bayou mounting that which Toussaint had brought.

"Will you go round, or pass the house?" Toussaint asked of his master. "Madame Ogé is standing in the door-way."

Bayou was about to turn his horse's head, but the person in the door-way came out into the darkness and called him by his name. He was obliged to go forward.

"Madame," said he, "I hope you have no trouble with your people. I hope your people are all steady."

"Never mind me and my people," replied a tremulous voice. "What I want to know is what has happened at Cap. Who have risen? Whose are these fires?"

"The negroes have risen on a few plantations, that is all. We shall soon—"

"The negroes!" echoed the voice. "You are sure it is only the negroes?"

"Only the negroes, madame. Can I be of service to you? If you have any reason to fear that your force—"

"I have no reason to fear any thing. I will not detain you. No doubt you are wanted at home, M. Bayou."

And she re-entered her house and closed the doors.

"How you have disappointed her!" said Papalier. "She hoped to hear that her race had risen, and were avenging her sons on us. I am thankful to-night," he continued, after a pause, "that my little girls are at Paris. How glad might that poor woman have been if her sons had staid there! Strange enough! Paris is called the very centre of disorder, and yet it seems the only place for our sons and daughters in these days."

"And strangely enough," said Bayou, "I am glad that I have neither wife, son, nor daughter. I felt that, even while Odeluc was holding forth about the age of security which we were now

entering upon—I felt at the moment that there must be something wrong; that all could not be right when a man feels glad that he has only himself to take care of. Our negroes are better off than we, so far. Hey, Toussaint?"

"I think so, sir."

"How many wives and children have you, Toussaint?" asked Papalier.

"I have five children, sir."

"And how many wives in your time?"

Toussaint made no answer. Bayou said for him,

"He has such a good wife that he never wanted more. He married her when he was five-and-twenty; did not you, Toussaint?"

Toussaint had dropped into the rear. His master observed that Toussaint was rather romantic, and did not like jesting on domestic affairs. He was more prudish about such matters than whites fresh from the mother-country. Whether he had got it out of his books, or whether it really was a romantic attachment to his wife, there was no knowing; but he was quite unlike his race generally in family matters.

"Does he take upon himself to be scandalized at us?" asked Papalier.

"I do not ask him. But if you like to consult him about your Thérèse, I do not doubt he will tell you his mind."

"Come, can not we get on faster? This is a horrid road, to be sure; but poor Thérèse will think it is all over with me if she looks at the red sky toward Cap."

There were reasons enough for alarm about M. Papalier's safety, without looking over toward Cap. When the gentlemen arrived at Arabie, his plantation, they found the iron gates down and lying on the grass; young trees hewn down, as if for bludgeons; the cattle couched in the cane-fields, lapped in the luxury of the sweet tops and sprouts; the doors of the sugar-house and mansion removed, the windows standing wide, and no one to answer call. The slave-quarter also was evidently deserted.

Papalier clapped spurs to his horse, and rode round faster than his companions could follow him. At length Bayou intercepted his path at a sharp turn, caught his bridle, and said,

"My dear fellow, come with me. There is nothing to be done here. Your people are all gone; and if they come back, they will only cut your throat. You must come with me; and, under the circumstances, I can not stay longer. I ought to be at home."

"True, true. Go, and I will follow. I must find out whether they have carried off Thérèse. I must and I will."

Toussaint pricked his horse into the courtyard, and, after a searching look around, dragged out from behind the well a young negress who had been crouching there, with an infant in her arms. She shrieked and struggled till she saw Papalier, when she rushed toward him.

"Poor Thérèse!" cried he, patting her shoulder. "How we have frightened you! There

is nobody here but friends. At least, so it seems. Where are all the people? And who did this mischief?"

The young creature trembled excessively; and her terror marred for the time a beauty which was celebrated all over the district—a beauty which was admitted as fully by the whites as by people of her own race. Her features were now convulsed by fear as she told what had happened; that a body of negroes had come three hours since, and had summoned Papalier's people to meet at Latour's estate, where all the force of the plain was to unite before morning; that Papalier's people made no difficulty about going, only stopping to search the house for what arms and ammunition might be there, and to do the mischief which now appeared; that she believed the whites at the sugar-house must have escaped, as she had seen and heard nothing of bloodshed; and that this was all she knew, as she had hidden herself and her infant, first in one place, and then in another, as she fancied safest, hoping that nobody would remember her, which seemed to have been the case, as no one molested her till Toussaint saw her, and terrified her as they perceived. She had not looked in his face, but supposed that some of Latour's people had come back for her.

"Now you will come with me," said Bayou to Papalier, impatiently.

"I will, thank you. Toussaint, help her up behind me, and carry the child, will you? Hold fast, Thérèse, and leave off trembling as soon as you can."

Thérèse would let no one carry the infant but herself. She kept her seat well behind her master, though still trembling when she alighted at the stables at Breda.

Placide and Denis were on the watch at the stables.

"Run, Denis!" said his brother. And Denis was off to tell his mother that Toussaint and M. Bayou were safe home.

"Any thing happened, Placide?" asked Bayou.

"Yes, sir. The people were sent for to Latour's, and most of them are gone. Not all, sir. Saxe would not go till he saw father; nor Cassius, nor Antoine, nor—"

"Is there any mischief done? Any body hurt?"

"No, sir. They went off very quietly."

"Quietly, indeed! They take quietly enough all the kindness I have shown them these thirty years. They quietly take the opportunity of leaving me alone to-night, of all nights, when the devils from hell are abroad, scattering their fire as they go."

"If you will enter, M. Bayou," said Toussaint, "my wife will get you supper; and the boys and I will collect the people that are left, and bring them up to the house. They have not touched your arms, sir. If you will have them ready for us—"

"Good, good! Papalier, we can not do bet-

ter. Come in. Toussaint, take home this young woman. Your girls will take care of her. Eh! what's the matter? Well, put her where you will, only let her be taken care of, that is all."

"I will speak to Jeannette, sir."

"Ay, do. Jeannette will let Thérèse come to no harm, Pupalier. Come in, till Toussaint brings a report of how matters stand with us poor masters."

CHAPTER III.

WHAT TO DO!

THE report brought by Toussaint was astounding to his hearers, even after the preparation afforded by the events of the evening. It was clear that the negroes had every thing in their own hands, and that the spirit roused in them was so fierce, so revengeful, as to leave no hope that they would use their power with moderation. The Breda estate, and every one near it, was to be ravaged when those on the north side of the plain were completely destroyed. The force assembled at Latour's already amounted to four thousand; and no assistance could be looked for from the towns at all adequate to meet such numbers, since the persons and property of the whites, hourly accumulating in the towns as the insurrection spread, required more than all the means of protection that the colony afforded. The two gentlemen agreed, as they sat at the table covered with supper, wine, and glittering arms, that to remain was to risk their lives with no good object. It was clear that they must fly.

Toussaint suggested that a quantity of sugar from the Breda estate was now at Port Paix, lying ready for shipment. There was certainly one vessel, if not more, in that port, belonging to the United States. If the gentlemen would risk the ride to the coast with him, he thought he could put them on board, and they might take with them this sugar, intended for France, but now wanted for their subsistence in their exile. Bayou saw at once that this was the best plan he could adopt. Pupalier was unwilling to turn his back so soon and so completely on his property. Bayou was only attorney to the Breda estate, and had no one but himself to care for. Pupalier was a proprietor, and he could not give up at once, and forever, the lands which his daughters should inherit after him. He could not instantly decide upon this. He would wait some hours at least. He thought he could contrive to get into some town, or into the Spanish territory, though he might be compelled to leave the plain. He slept for this night with his arms at hand, and under the watch of Placide, who might be trusted to keep awake and listen, as his father vouched for him. Bayou was gone presently, with such little money as he happened to have in the house; and in his pockets, the gold ornaments which Toussaint's

wife insisted on his accepting, and which were not to be despised in this day of his adversity. He was sorry to take her necklace and earrings, which were really valuable; but she said truly that he had been a kind master for many years, and ought to command what they had, now that they were all in trouble together.

Before the next noon M. Bayou was on board the American vessel in the harbor of Port Paix, weary and sad, but safe, with his sugar, and pocketful of cash and gold trinkets. Before evening, Toussaint, who rode like the wind, and seemed incapable of fatigue, was cooling himself under a tamarind-tree in a nook of the Breda estate.

He was not there to rest himself, while the world seemed to be falling into chaos around him. He was there for the duty of the hour; to meet, by appointment, the leader of the insurgents, Jean François, whom, till now, he had always supposed to be his friend, as far as their intercourse went, though Jean had never been so dear to him as Henri. He had not sat long, listening for sounds of approach amidst the clatter of the neighboring palm-tree tops, whose stiff leaves struck one another as they waved in the wind, when Jean appeared from behind the mill.

"You have stopped our wheel," said Toussaint, pointing to the reeking water-wheel. "It will be cracked in the sun before you can set it going again."

"Yes, we have stopped all the mills," replied Jean. "Every stream in the colony has a holiday to-day, and may frolic as it likes. I am afraid I made you wait supper last night."

"You gave me poison, Jean. You have poisoned my trust in my friends. I watched for you as for a friend; and what were you doing the while? You were rebelling, ravaging, and murdering!"

"Go on," said Jean. "Tell me how it appears to you, and then I will tell you how it appears to me."

"It appears to me, then, that if the whites are to blame toward those who are in their power; if they have been cruel to the Ogés and their party; if they have oppressed their negroes, as they too often have, our duty is clear—to bear and forbear, to do them good in return for their evil. To rise against them cunningly, to burn their plantations and murder them—to do this is to throw back the Gospel in the face of Him who gave it!"

"But you do not understand this rising. It is not for revenge."

"Why do I not understand it? Because you knew that I should disapprove it, and kept me at home by a false appointment, that I might be out of the way. Do you say all this is not for revenge? I look at the hell you have made of this colony between night and morning, and I say that if this be not from revenge, there must be something viler than revenge in the hearts of devils and of men."

"And now hear me," said Jean; "for I am

wanted at Latour's, and my time is short. It was no false appointment last night. I was on my way to you, when I was stopped by some news which altered our plans in a moment, and made us rise sooner by three days than we expected. I was coming to tell you all, and engage you to be one of our chiefs. Have you heard that the *Calypse* has put into port at the other end of the island?"

"No."

"Then you do not know the news she brought. She has a royalist master, who is in no hurry to tell his news to the revolutionary whites. The king and all his family tried to escape from France in June. They were overtaken on the road, and brought back prisoners to Paris."

Toussaint, who always uncovered his head at the name of the king, now bent it low in genuine grief.

"Is it not true," said Jean, "that our masters are traitors? Do they not insult and defy the king? Would there not have been one shout of joy through all Cap last night, if this news had been brought to the deputies after dinner with their wine?"

"It is true. But they would still have been less guilty than those who add ravage and murder to rebellion."

"There was no stopping the people when the messengers from the *Calypse* crossed the frontier, and sent the cry, 'Vive le Roi! et l'ancien régime,' through the negro quarters of every estate they reached. The people were up on the Noé plantation at the word. Upon my honor, the glare of the fire was the first I knew about it. Then the spirit spread among our people like the flames among our masters' canes. I like murder no better than you, Toussaint; but when once slaves are up, with knife and fire-brand, those may keep revenge from kindling who can; I can not."

"At least you need not join; you can oppose yourself to it."

"I have not joined. I have saved three or four whites this day by giving them warning. I have hidden a family in the woods, and I will die before I will tell where they are. I did what I could to persuade Gallifer's people to let Odeluc and his soldiers turn back to Cap; and I believe they would but for Odeluc's obstinacy in coming among us. If he would have kept his distance, he might have been alive now. As it is—"

"And is he dead—the good Odeluc?"

"There he lies, and half a dozen of the soldiers with him. I am sorry, for he always thought well of us; but he thrust himself into the danger. One reason of my coming here now is, to say that this plantation and Arable will be attacked to-night, and Bayou had better roost in a tree till morning."

"My master is safe."

"Safe? Where?"

"On the sea."

"You have saved him. Have you—I know

your love of obedience is strong—have you pledged yourself to our masters to oppose the rising—to fight on their side?"

"I give no pledges but to my conscience. And I have no party where both are wrong. The whites are revengeful, and rebel against their king; and the blacks are revengeful, and rebel against their masters."

"Did you hear any thing on the coast of the arrival of the *Blonde* frigate from Jamaica?"

"Yes: there again is more treason. The whites at Cap have implored the English to take possession of the colony. First traitors to the king, they would now join the enemies of their country. Fear not, Jean, that I would defend the treason of such; but I would not murder them."

"What do you mean to do? This very night your estate will be attacked. Your family is almost the only one remaining on it. Have you thought what you will do?"

"I have; and your news only confirms my thought."

"You will not attempt to defend the plantation!"

"What would my single arm do? It would provoke revenge which might otherwise sleep."

"True. Let the estate be deserted, and the gates and doors left wide, and no mischief may be done. Will you join us then?"

"Join you! no! Not till your loyalty is free from stain. Not while you fight for your king with a cruelty from which your king would recoil."

"You will wait," said Jean, sarcastically, "till we have conquered the colony for the king. That done, you will avow your loyalty."

"Such is not my purpose, Jean," replied Toussaint, quietly. "You have called me your friend; but you understand me no more than if I were your enemy. I will help to conquer the colony for the king; but it shall be to restore to him its lands as the King of kings gave them to him; not ravaged and soaked in blood, but redeemed with care, to be made fair and fruitful, as held in trust for him. I shall join the Spaniards, and fight for my king with my king's allies."

Jean was silent, evidently struck with the thought. If he had been troubled with speculations as to what he should do with his undisciplined, half-savage forces, after the whites should have been driven to intrench themselves in the towns, it is possible that this idea of crossing the Spanish line, and putting himself and his people under the command of these allies, might be a welcome relief to his perplexity.

"And your family," said he; "will the Spaniards receive our women and children into their camp?"

"I shall not ask them. I have a refuge in view for my family."

"When will you go?"

"When you leave me. You will find the estate deserted this night, as you wish. The few negroes who are here will doubtless go

with me; and we shall have crossed the river before morning."

"You would not object," said Jean, "to be joined on the road by some of our negro force—on my pledge, you understand, that they will not ravage the country."

"Some too good for your present command?" said Toussaint, smiling. "I will command them on one other condition—that they will treat well any white who may happen to be with me."

"I said nothing about your commanding them," said Jean. "If I send men I shall send officers. But whites! what whites? Did you not say Bayou was on the sea?"

"I did; but there may be other whites whom I choose to protect, as you say you are doing. If, instead of hiding whites in the woods, I carry them across the frontier, what treatment may I expect for my party on the road?"

"I will go with you myself, and that is promising every thing," said Jean, making a virtue of what was before a strong inclination. "Set out in two hours from this time. I will put the command of the plain into Biasson's hands, and make a camp near the Spanish lines. The posts in that direction are weak, and the whites panic-struck, if, indeed, they have not all fled to the fort. Well, well," he continued, "keep to your time, and I will join you at the cross of the four roads, three miles south of Fort Dauphin. All will be safe that far, at least."

"If not, we have some strong arms among us," replied Toussaint. "I believe my girls (or one of them, at least) would bear arms where my honor is at stake. So our king is a prisoner! and we are free! Such are the changes which Heaven sends!"

"Ay; how do you feel, now you are free?" said Jean. "Did you not put your horse to a gallop when you turned your back on your old master?"

"Not a word of that, Jean. Let us not think of ourselves. There is work to do for our king. He is our task-master now."

"You are in a hurry for another master," said Jean. "I am not tired of being my own master yet."

"I wish you would make your people masters of themselves, Jean. They are not fit for power. Heaven take it from us, by putting all power into the hand of the king!"

"We meet by starlight," said Jean. "I have the business of five thousand men to arrange first: so, more of the king another time."

He leaped the nearest fence and was gone. Toussaint rose and walked away, with a countenance so serious that Margot asked if there was bad news of M. Bayou.

When the family understood that the Breda estate was to be attacked this night, there was no need to hasten their preparations for departure. In the midst of the hurry, Aimée consulted Isaac about an enterprise which had occurred to her on her father's behalf; and the

result was, that they ventured up to the house, and as far as M. Bayou's book-shelves, to bring away the volumes they had been accustomed to see their father read. This thought entered Aimée's mind when she saw him, busy as he was, carefully pocket the Epictetus he had been reading the night before. M. Papalier was reading while Thérèse was making packages of comforts for him. He observed the boy and girl, and when he found that the books they took were for their father, he muttered over the volume he held,

"Bayou was a fool to allow it. I always told him so. When our negroes get to read like so many gentlemen, no wonder the world is turned upside down."

"Do your negroes read, M. Papalier?" asked Isaac.

"No, indeed! not one of them."

"Where are they all, then?"

Aimée put in her word.

"Why do they not take care of you, as father did of M. Bayou?"

CHAPTER IV.

WHITHER AWAY?

M. PAPALIER did not much relish the idea of roosting in a tree for the night; especially as, on coming down in the morning, there would be no friend or helper near to care for or minister to him. Habitually and thoroughly as he despised the negroes, he preferred traveling in their company to hiding among the monkeys; and he therefore decided at once to do as Toussaint concluded he would—accompany him to the Spanish frontier.

The river Massacre, the boundary at the north between the French and Spanish portions of the island, was about thirty miles distant from Breda. These thirty miles must be traveled between sunset and sunrise. Three or four horses, and two mules which were left on the plantation, were sufficient for the conveyance of the women, boys, and girls; and Placide ran, of his own accord, to M. Papalier's deserted stables, and brought thence a saddled horse for the gentleman, who was less able than the women to walk thirty miles in the course of a tropical summer's night.

"What will your Spanish friends think of our bringing so many women and children to their post?" said Papalier to Toussaint, as soon as they were on their way. "They will not think you worth having, with all the incumbrances you carry."

"I shall carry none," said Toussaint.

"What do you mean to do with your wife and children?"

"I shall put them in a safe place by the way. For your own sake, M. Papalier, I must ask you what you mean to do in the Spanish post, republican as you are. You know the Spaniards are allies of the King of France."

"They are allies of France, and will doubtless receive any honorable French gentleman," said Papatier, confidently, though Toussaint's question only echoed a doubt which he had already spoken to himself. "You are acting so like a friend to me here, Toussaint, that I can not suppose you will do me mischief there, by any idle tales about the past."

"I will not; but I hear that the Marquis d'Hermona knows the politics of every gentleman in the colony. If there have been any tales abroad of speeches of yours against the king, or threats, or acts of rebellion, the Marquis d'Hermona knows them all."

"I have taken less part in politics than most of my neighbors; and Hermona knows that if he knows the rest. But what shall I do with Thérèse if your women stop short on the way? Could you make room for her with them?"

"Not with them, but—"

"My good fellow, this is no time for fancies. I am sorry to see you set your girls above their condition and their neighbors. There is no harm about poor Thérèse. Indeed, she is very well educated; I have had her well taught; and they might learn many things from her, if you really wish them to be superior. She is not a bit the worse for being a favorite of mine; and it will be their turn soon to be somebody's favorites, you know, and that before long, depend upon it," he continued, turning on his saddle to look for Génifrède and Aimée. "They are fine girls—very fine girls for their age."

When he turned again, Toussaint was no longer beside his horse. He was at the head of the march.

"What a sulky fellow he is!" muttered the planter, with a smile. "The airs of these people are curious enough. They take upon them to despise Thérèse, who has more beauty than all his tribe, and almost as much education as the learned Toussaint himself."

He called to the sulky fellow, however, and the sulky fellow came. What Papatier wanted to say was,

"You seem to know more of these Spaniards than I. What will become of Thérèse if I take her among them; which, you see, you oblige me to do?"

"I proposed to her," said Toussaint, "to leave her with some of our people near Fort Dauphin."

"Fort Egalité, you mean. That is its present name, you know. So you asked her! Why did not you speak to me about it? It is my affair, not hers."

"I thought it her affair. She will not remain behind, however. She begged me to say nothing to you about her leaving you."

"Indeed! I will soon settle that." And the planter immediately overtook the horse on which sat Thérèse, with her infant on her arm. Thérèse smiled as she saw him coming; but the first few words he said to her covered her face with tears. Blinded by these tears, she guided her horse among the tough aloes which

grew along the border of the bridle-path, and the animal stumbled, nearly jerking the infant from her arm. Her master let her get over the difficulty as she might, while he rode on in the midst of the green track.

Placide disdained to ride. He strode along, singing in a low voice, with a package on his shoulders, and his path marked by the fire-flies, which flew round his head or settled on his woolen cap. Isaac had made Aimée happy by getting on her mule. Génifrède heard, from the direction in which they were, sometimes smothered laughter, but for the most part a never-ending, low murmur of voices, as if they were telling one another interminable stories. Génifrède never could make out what Isaac and Aimée could be forever talking about. She wondered that they could talk now, when every monkey-voice from the wood, every click of a frog from the ponds, every buzz of insects from the citron-hedge, struck fear into her. She did not ask Placide to walk beside her horse, but she kept near that on which her mother rode, behind Denis, who held a cart-whip which he was forbidden to crack—an accomplishment which he had learned from the driver of the plantation.

It soon became clear that Jean had made active use of the hours since he parted from Toussaint. He must have sent messengers in many directions; for, from beneath the shadow of every cacao grove; from under the branches of many a clump of bamboos; from the recess of a ravine here, from the mouth of a green road there; beside the brawling brook, or from their couch among the canes, appeared negroes, singly or in groups, ready to join the traveling-party. Among all these there were no women and children. They had been safely bestowed somewhere; and these men now regarded themselves as soldiers, going to the camp of the allies, to serve against their old masters on behalf of the king. "Vive le Roi, et l'ancien régime!" was the word, as each detachment joined; a word most irritating to Papatier, who thought to himself many times during this night that he would have put all to hazard on his own estate rather than have undertaken this march, if he had known that he was to be one of a company of negroes, gathering like the tempest in its progress, and uttering at every turning, as if in mockery of himself, "Vive le Roi, et l'ancien régime!" He grew very cross, while quite sensible of the necessity of appearing in a good mood to every one—except, indeed, poor Thérèse.

"We are free—this is freedom!" said Toussaint more than once, as he laid his hand on the bridle of his wife's horse, and seemed incapable of uttering any other words. He looked up at the towering trees, as if measuring with his eye the columnar palms, which appeared to those in their shade as if crowned with stars. He glanced into the forests with an eye which, to Margot, appeared as if it could pierce through darkness itself. He raised his face in the direction of

the central mountain peaks, round which the white lightning was exploding from moment to moment; and Margot saw that tears were streaming on his face—the first tears she had known him shed for years. “We are free—this is freedom!” he repeated, as he took off his cap; “but, thank God! we have the king for our master now.”

“You will come and see us?” said she. “We shall see you sometimes while you are serving the king?”

“Yes.” He was called away by another accession of numbers, a party of four who ran down among them from a mountain path. Toussaint brushed away his unwonted tears, and went forward, hearing a well-known voice inquire for Toussaint Breda.

“Here I am, Jacques!” he exclaimed, in some surprise, as he addressed himself to a short, stout-built young negro. “You are the first townsman among us, Jacques. Where is old Dessalines?”

“Here is my master,” said Jacques.

“Not the better for being a master,” said the old tiler, who was himself a negro. “I found myself no safer than Jacques in the town; so I came away with him, and we have been among the rocks all day, tired enough.”

“Have not you a horse for him?” asked Jacques. Toussaint stepped back to desire Aimée and Isaac to give up their mule to Dessalines; but, before it was done, Dessalines was mounted on Papalier’s horse. Jacques had told Papalier, on finding that he had not been walking at all, that his horse was wanted, and Papalier had felt all the danger of refusing to yield it up. He was walking moodily by the side of Thérèse, when Toussaint offered him the mule, which he haughtily declined.

When Dessalines was mounted, Jacques came running forward to Toussaint, to ask and to tell much concerning their singular circumstances.

“Your party is too noisy,” said he. “The whole country is up; and I saw, not far off, two hours ago, a party that were bringing ammunition from Cap. There may be more; and if we fall in their way, with a white in company—”

“True, true.” And Toussaint turned back to command silence. He told every one that the safety of all might depend on the utmost possible degree of quietness being observed. He separated Isaac from Aimée, as the only way of obtaining silence from them, and warned the merry blacks in the rear that they must be still as death. He and Jacques, however, exchanged a few more words in a low whisper, as they kept in advance of the party.

“How do they get ammunition from Cap?” asked Toussaint. “Have they a party in the town? I thought the town negroes had been sent on board ship?”

“The suspected ones are. They are the silly and the harmless, who have still wit and mischief enough to give out powder and ball slyly

for the plantation negroes. Once over the river, what will you do with your party?”

“My wife and children will be safe with my brother Paul; you know he fishes on the coast, opposite the Seven Brothers. I shall enter the Spanish ranks; and every one else here may do as he thinks proper.”

“Do not you call yourself a commander, then? Why do not you call us your regiment, and take the command as a matter of course, as Jean has done?”

“If it is desired, I am ready. Hark!”

There was evidently a party at some distance, numerous and somewhat noisy, and on the approach from behind. Toussaint halted his party, quickly whispered his directions, and withdrew them with all speed and quietness within the black shade of a cacao plantation on the left of the road. They had to climb an ascent; but there they found a green recess, so canopied with interwoven branches that no light could enter from the stars, and so hedged in by the cacao plants, growing twelve feet high among the trees, that the party could hardly have been seen from the road in broad daylight. There they stood crowded together in utter darkness and stillness, unless, as Génifrède feared, the beating of her heart might be heard above the hum of the mosquito or the occasional rustle of the foliage.

The approaching troop came on, tramping, and sometimes singing and shouting. Those in the covert knew not whether most to dread a shouting which should agitate their horses, or a silence which might betray a movement on their part. This last seemed the most probable. The noise subsided; and when the troop was close at hand, only a stray voice or two was singing. They had with them two or three trucks, drawn by men, on which were piled barrels of ammunition. They were now very near. Whether it was that Thérèse, in fear of her infant crying, pressed it so close to her bosom as to awaken it, or whether the rumbling and tramping along the road roused its sleeping ear, the child stirred, and began what promised to be a long, shrill wail if it had not been stopped. How it was stopped, the trembling, sickening mother herself did not know. She only knew that a strong hand wrenched the child from her grasp in the black darkness, and that all was still, unless, as she then and ever after had a shuddering apprehension, there was something of a slight gurgle which reached her strained ear. Her own involuntary moan was stopped almost before it became a sound; stopped by a tap on the shoulder, whose authoritative touch she well knew.

No one else stirred for long after the troop had passed. Then Toussaint led his wife’s horse down into the road again, and the party resumed their march as if nothing had happened.

“My child!” said Thérèse, fearfully. “Give me my child!” She looked about, and saw that no one seemed to have the infant.

"I will not let it cry," she said. "Give me back my child!"

"What is it?" asked Papalier, coming beside her horse. She told her grief as she prepared to spring down.

"No, keep your seat! Don't get down," said he, in a tone she dared not disobey. "I will inquire for the child."

He went away, and returned—without it.

"This is a sad thing," said he, leading her horse forward with the rest. "No one knows any thing about the poor thing. Why did you let it go?"

"Have you asked them all? Who snatched it from me? Oh, ask who took it! Let me look for it. I will—I will—"

"It is too late now. We can not stop or turn back. These sad accidents will happen at such times."

"Leave me behind—oh, leave me in the wood! I can follow when I have found it. Leave me behind!"

"I can not spare you, my dear. I should never see you again, and I can not spare you. It is sad enough to have lost the child."

"It was your child," said she, pleadingly.

"And you are mine too, my dear. I can not spare you both."

Thérèse had never felt before. All that had moved her during her yet short life—all emotions in one were nothing to the passion of this moment—the conditional hatred that swelled her soul; conditional—for, from moment to moment, she believed and disbelieved that Papalier had destroyed her child. The thought sometimes occurred that he was not the only cruel one. No one seemed to pity or care for her; not even Margot or the girls came near her. She more than once was about to seek and appeal to them; but her master held her bridle, and would not permit her to stop or turn, saying occasionally that the lives of all depended on perfect quiet and order in the march. When they arrived at the cross, at the junction of four roads, they halted, and there she told her story, and was convinced that the grieved women knew nothing of her loss till that moment. It was too late now for any thing but compassion.

Jean Français soon appeared with a troop so numerous that all necessity for caution and quiet was over. They could hardly meet an equal force during the remainder of the march, and might safely make the forests and ravines echo to their progress. Jean took off his cocked hat in saluting Toussaint, and commended his punctuality and his arrangements.

"Jean always admires what my husband does," observed Margot to her acquaintance Jacques. "You hear how he is praising him for what he has done to-night."

"To be sure. Every body praises Toussaint Breda," replied Jacques.

The wife laughed with delight.

"Every body praises him but me," pursued Jacques. "I find fault with him sometimes, and to-night particularly."

"Then you are wrong, Jacques. You know you have every body against you."

"Time will show that I am right. Time will show the mischief of sending away any whites to do us harm in far countries.

"Oh, you do not blame him for helping away M. Bayou?"

"Yes I do."

"Why, we have been under him ever since we were children—and a kind youth he was then. And he taught my husband to read, and made him his coachman; and then he made him overseer; and he has always indulged the children, and always bought my young guinea-fowl, and—"

"I know that. All that will not prevent the mischief of helping him away. Toussaint ought to have seen that, if we send our masters to all the four sides of the world, they will bring the world down upon us."

"Perhaps Toussaint did see it," said the man himself, from the other side of his wife's horse. "But he saw another thing too: that any whites who staid would be murdered."

"That is true enough; and murdered they ought to be. They are a race of tyrants and rebels that our warm island hates."

"Nobody hated M. Bayou," said Margot.

"Yes, I did. Every one who loves the blacks hates the whites."

"I think not," said Toussaint. "At least, it is not so with Him who made them both. He is pleased with mercy, Jacques, and not with murder."

Jacques laughed, and muttered something about the priests having been brought in by the whites for a convenience; to which Toussaint merely replied that it was not a priest, nor an ally of white masters, who forgave his enemies on the cross.

"Father," said Placide, joining the group, "why is Jean commanding your march? He speaks to you as if you were under him."

"Because he considers it his march."

"He praised your father very much, Placide," said his mother.

"Yes, just as if my father was under him; as if the march were not ours. We began it."

"I command those who began it—that is, my own family, Placide. I command you to obey Jean while you are with him. On the other side the river you shall be commander all the way to your uncle's house. You will follow his lead, Margot?"

"Oh yes, if he leads straight. Jean is a commander, Placide. Look at his cocked hat."

"And he calls himself commander-in-chief of the armies of France."

"In St. Domingo. Well, so he is," said Toussaint, smiling, and pointing to the troop. "Here are the armies of the King of France in St. Domingo, and here Jean commands."

At this moment Jean made proclamation for Toussaint Breda; and Toussaint joined him, leaving his wife saying, "You see he wants my

husband at every turn. I am sure he thinks a great deal of my husband."

"Toussaint," said Jean, "I shall introduce you to the Marquis d'Hermona, and I have no doubt he will give you a command."

"I shall introduce myself to him, Jean."

"But he will be expecting you. He will receive you according to my report—as a man of ability, and a most valuable officer. I sent messengers forward to tell him of my approach with re-inforcements; and I gave a prodigious report of you."

"Still I shall speak for myself, Jean."

"What I now have to ask of you is, that you will dress like an officer—like me. The uniform is, on the whole, of no great consequence at this season, when the whites wear all the linen, and as little cloth as they can. But the hat, Toussaint, the hat! You will not show yourself to the Marquis d'Hermona in a cap! For my sake, do not show yourself till you have procured a cocked hat."

"Where did you get yours, Jean?"

Jean could only say that it was from one who would never want it again.

"We will go as we are," said Toussaint. "You look like a commander, as you are; and I look like what I am, Toussaint Breda."

"But he will not believe what I shall say of you if he sees a mere common negro."

"Then let him disbelieve till I have shown what I am. We shall find daylight on the other side of this ridge."

They had been for some time ascending the ridge which lies north and south between Fort Dauphin and the river Massacre, the Spanish boundary. In the covert of the woods which clothed the slope, all was yet darkness; but when the travelers could catch a glimpse upward through the interwoven branches, they saw that the stars were growing pale, and that the heavens were filling with a yellower light. On emerging from the woods on the summit of the ridge, they found that morning was indeed come, though the sun was not yet visible. There was a halt, as if the troops, now facing the east, would wait for his appearance. To the left, where the ridge sank down into the sea, lay Mancenille Bay, whose dark gray waters, smooth as glass, as they rolled in upon the shore, began to show lines of light along their swell. A dim sail or two, small and motionless, told that the fishermen were abroad. From this bay the river Massacre led the eye along the plain which lay under the feet of the troops, and between this ridge and another, darkly wooded, which bounded the valley to the east; while to the south-east the view was closed in by the mass of peaks of the Cibao group of mountains. At the first moment, these peaks, rising eight thousand feet from the plain, appeared hard, cold, and gray between the white clouds that encumbered their middle height and the kindling sky. But from moment to moment their aspect softened. The gray melted into lilac, yellow, and a faint, blush-

ing red, till the stark, barren crags appeared bathed in the hues of the soft, yielding clouds which opened to let forth the sun. The mists were then seen to be stirring—rising, curling, sailing, rolling, as if the breezes were imprisoned among them, and struggling to come forth. The breezes came, and, as it seemed, from those peaks. The woods bent before them at one sweep. The banyan-tree, a grove in itself, trembled through all its leafy columns, and shook off its dews in a wide circle, like the return shower of a playing fountain. Myriads of palms which covered the uplands, till now still as a sleeping host beneath the stars, bowed their plumed heads as the winds went forth, and shook off dews and slumber from the gorgeous parasitic beauties which they sustained. With the first ray that the sun leveled among the woods, these matted creepers shook their flowery festoons, their twined green ropes, studded with opening blossoms and bells, more gay than the burnished insects and gorgeous birds which flitted among their tangles. In the plain, the river no longer glimmered gray through the mists, but glittered golden among the meadows, upon which the wild cattle were descending from the clefts of the hills. Back to the north the river led the eye, past the cluster of hunters' huts on the margin; past the post where the Spanish flag was flying, and whence the early drum was sounding; past a slope of arrowy ferns here, a grove of lofty cocoa-nut-trees there; once more to the bay, now diamond-strewn, and rocking on its bosom the boats, whose sails were now specks of light in contrast with the black islets of the Seven Brothers, which caught the eye as if just risen from the sea.

"No windmills here! No cattle-mills!" the negroes were heard saying to one another. "No canes, no sugar-houses, no teams, no overseers' houses, no overseers! By G—d, it is a fine place, this! So we are going down there to be soldiers to the king! Those cattle are wild, and yonder are the hunters going out! By G—d, it is a fine place!"

In somewhat different ways, every one present but Papalier and Thérèse were indulging the same mood of thought. There was a wildness in the scene which made the heart beat high with the sense of freedom. For some the emotion seemed too strong. Toussaint pointed out to his boys the path on the other side of the river which would lead them to the point of the shore nearest to Paul's hut, instructed them how to find or make a habitation for their mother and sisters till he could visit them, gave his wife a letter to his brother, and, except to bid his family a brief farewell for a brief time, spoke no more till he reached the Spanish post and inquired for the general.

Jean stepped before him into the general's presence, taking possession of the centre of the green space before the tent, where the Marquis d'Hermona was enjoying the coolness of the morning. After having duly de-

clared his own importance, and announced the accession of numbers he was likely to bring, Jean proceeded to extol Toussaint as one of the valuables he had brought. After apologizing for his friend's want of a cocked hat, he proceeded to exhibit his learning, declaring that he had studied Plutarch, Cæsar's Commentaries, Epictetus, Marshal Saxe's Military Reveries—

Here he was stopped by the grasp of Toussaint's hand upon his arm. Toussaint told the general that he came alone, without chief and without followers, the few men who had left Breda with him having ranged themselves with the force of Jean Français. He came alone, to offer the strength of his arm, on behalf of his king, to the allies of royalist France.

The Spanish soldiers, who glittered all around in their arms and bright uniform, looked upon the somewhat gaunt negro, in his plantation-dress, dusty with travel, and his woolen cap in hand, and thought, probably, that the King of France would not be much aided by such an ally. It is probable; for a smile went round, in which Jean joined. It is probable that the Marquis d'Hermona thought differently; for he said,

"The strength of your arm! Good! And the strength of your head too, I hope. We get more arms than heads from your side of the frontier. Is it true that you have studied the art of war?"

"I have studied it in books."

"Very well. We want officers for our black troops—all we can raise in the present crisis. You will have the rank of colonel in a regiment to be immediately organized. Are you content?"

Toussaint signified his assent, and orders were given for a tent to be prepared for his present repose. He looked around, as if for some one he did not see. On being asked, he said that if there was at the post a priest who spoke French, he could wish to converse with him.

"Laxabon understands French, I think," said the marquis to a gentleman of his staff. The aid assented.

"Your excellent desire shall be gratified," said the general. "I doubt not Father Laxabon will presently visit you in your tent."

Father Laxabon had heard rumors of the horrors perpetrated in the French colony within the last two nights. On being told that his attendance was eagerly desired by a fugitive negro, he recoiled for a moment from what he might have to hear.

When he entered the tent, he found Toussaint alone, on the ground, his bosom bursting with deep and thick-coming sobs.

"How is this, my son?" said the priest. "Is this grief or is it penitence?"

"I am free," said Toussaint, "and I am an oppression to myself. I did not seek freedom. I was at ease, and did not desire it, seeing how men abuse their freedom."

"You must not, then, abuse your freedom, my son," said the priest, wholly relieved.

"How shall I appear before God—I, who have ever been guided, and who know not whether I can guide myself—my master gone—my employment gone—and I, by his will, a free man, but unprepared, unfit? Receive my confession, father, and guide me from this time."

"Willingly, my son. He who has appointed a new lot to you, will enable me to guide you in it."

The tent was closed; and Toussaint knelt to relieve his full heart from its new sense of freedom, by subjecting himself to a task-master of the soul.

CHAPTER V.

GRIEFS OF THE LOYAL.

MARGOT doubted much at the end of the first week, and at the end of every following week, whether she liked freedom. Margot had had few cares during the many years that she had lived under the mild rule of M. Bayou; her husband faithful and kind, and her children provided for without present anxiety on her part. Thoughts of the future would, it is true, occasionally trouble her, as she knew they weighed heavily on her husband's mind. When she saw Génifrède growing up, handsome in her parents' eyes, and so timid and reserved that her father sometimes said he wondered whether any one would ever know her mind better than her own family did; when Margot looked upon Génifrède, and considered that her lot in life depended on the will of M. Bayou, she shuddered to think what it might be. When M. Bayou told Génifrède that she was well coiffée, or that he wished she would show the other girls among the house negroes how to make their Sunday gowns sit like hers, Génifrède invariably appeared not to hear, and often walked away in the midst of the speech; and then her mother could not but wonder how she would conduct herself whenever the day should come that must come, when (as there was no one on the Breda estate whom Génifrède liked or would associate with) M. Bayou should bring some one to their cottage, and desire Génifrède to marry him. When Margot looked upon her sons, and upon Aimée, now so inseparable from Isaac, and considered that their remaining together depended not only on M. Bayou's will, but on his life, she trembled lest the day should be at hand when Placide might be carried away northward, and Isaac eastward, and poor Aimée left desolate. Such had been the mother's passing cares in the situation in which nothing had been wanting to her immediate comfort. Now, amidst the perplexities of her new settlement, she was apt to forget that she had formerly had any cares.

Where to house the party had been the first difficulty. But for old Dessalines, who, being no soldier, had chosen to hide himself in the same retreat with them, they would hardly have had good shelter before the rains. Paul had

received them kindly; but Paul's kindness was of a somewhat indolent sort; and it was doubtful whether he would have proceeded beyond looking round his hut, and lamenting that it was no bigger, if his spirited son Moyse, a fine lad of sixteen, had not been there to do something more effectual, in finding the place and the materials for the old tiler to begin his work. It was Moyse who convinced the whole party from the plain that a hut of bamboo and palm-leaves would fall in an hour before one of the hail-storms of this rocky coast; and that it would not do to build on the sands, lest some high tide should wash them all away in the night. It was Moyse who led his cousins to the part of the beach where portions of wrecks were most likely to be found, and who lent the strongest hand to remove such beams and planks as Dessalines wanted for his work. A house large enough to hold the family was soon covered in. It looked well, perched on a platform of rock, and seeming to nestle in a recess of the huge precipices which rose behind it. It looked well, as Dessalines could obtain neither of his favorite paints to smear it with. It stood, neither red nor blue, but nearly the color of the rocks against which it leaned, and thatched with palm-leaves, which projected so far as to throw off the rains even to a depth below.

Paul provided fish, as much as his relations chose to have; but the young people chose to have many other things, under the guidance of Moyse, and here lay their mother's daily care. She believed that both boys and girls ran into a thousand dangers, and no one would help her to restrain them. Paul had always let Moyse have his own way; and Dessalines, when he had brought in drift-wood for her fires, which he daily chose to do, lay down in the sun when the sun shone, and before the fire when the clouds gathered, and slept away the hours. Paul wanted help in his fishing, and it was commonly Isaac who went with him, for Isaac was more fond of boating than rambling. Where Isaac was, there was Aimée. She gave no contemptible help in drawing in the nets; and, when the fish was landed, she and Isaac sat for hours among the mangroves which bordered the neighboring cove, under pretense of cleaning the fish, or of mending the nets, or of watching the cranes which stalked about the sands. Sometimes, in order to be yet more secure from disturbance, the brother and sister would put off again when they had landed Paul with his prize, and get upon the coral reef half a mile off; in calm weather collecting the shell-fish which were strewed there in multitudes, and watching the while the freaks and sports of the dolphins in the clear depths around, and in windy weather sitting in the midst of the spray, which was dashed over them from the heavy seas around. Many times in a morning or evening did Margot look out from her doorway, and see their dusky forms upon the reef, now sitting motionless in talk, now stooping for

mussels and crabs, and never, till the last moment, in the boat on their way home. Sometimes Denis was with them, sometimes with her, but oftener with the party led by Moyse.

Moyse had first enticed Génifréde up the rocks behind their dwelling, to get grass for hammocks, and to make matting for the floors. Almost from the first day it appeared as if Génifréde's fears all melted away in the presence of Moyse; and her mother became sure of this when, after grass enough had been procured, Génifréde continued to accompany Placide and Moyse in their almost daily expeditions for sporting and pleasure. They brought gnanas, tender young monkeys, and cocoa-nuts from the wood, wild kids from the rock, delicate ducks from the mountain ponds, and sometimes a hog or a calf from the droves and herds which flourished in the rich savannas on the southern side, on which they looked down from their ridge. In the joy of seeing her children home again, gladsome as they were, and feeling that they brought plenty and luxury into her cottage, Margot kept her cares to herself from day to day, and did not interfere with their proceedings. She sometimes thought she was foolish, and always was glad to see them enjoying their freedom; but still she felt doubtful whether she herself had not been happier at Breda. The only time when her heart was completely at ease and exulting was when Toussaint came to see his family, to open his heart to his wife, and to smile away her troubles. Her heart exulted when she saw him cross the ridge with a mounted private behind him, urge his horse down the ascent, gallop along the sands to the foot of the rocks, throw the bridle to his attendant, and mount to the platform, looking up as he approached to see whether she was on the watch. She was always on the watch. She liked to admire his uniform, and to hear his sword clatter as he walked. She liked to see him looking more important, more dignified than Bayou or Papalier had ever appeared in her eyes. Then her heart was always full of thoughts about her children, which he was as anxious to hear as she to tell; and he was the only one from whom she could learn any thing of what was going on in the world, or of what prospects lay before themselves. He brought news from France, from Cap and the plain, and, after a while, from America—that M. Bayou was settled at Baltimore, where he intended to remain, till, as he said, the pacification of the colony should enable him to return to Breda. There was no fear, as Toussaint always found, but that Margot would be looking out for him.

The tidings he brought were never very joyous, and often sad enough. He said little of his personal cares; but Margot gathered that he found it difficult to keep on good terms with Jean. Once he had resigned his rank of colonel, and had assumed an office of which Jean could not be jealous—that of physician to the forces; an office for which he was qualified by an early and extensive acquaintance with the

common diseases of the country, and the natural remedies provided by its soil. When the Marquis d'Hermona had insisted upon his resuming his command, as the best officer the negro forces could boast, Jean had purposed to arrest him on some frivolous charge, and the foolish act had only been prevented by a frank and strong remonstrance from his old friend. All this time Toussaint's military successes had been great; and his name now struck such awe into the lawless forces of the insurgent blacks, that it was unnecessary for him to shed their blood. He held the post of Marmalade, and from thence was present with such unheard-of rapidity of march, wherever violence was expected, that the spirit of outrage throughout the colony was at length kept in check. This peaceful mode of standing by the rights of the king was more acceptable to the gentle Toussaint than the warfare by which he had gained his power over his own race; but he knew well that things could not go on as they were; that order of some kind must be established; order which could be reached only through a fierce final struggle—and of what nature this order was to be, depended wholly upon the turn which affairs took in Europe.

He rarely brought good news from abroad. His countenance always grew sad when Margot asked what ships had arrived from France since his last visit. First he had to tell her that the people of Paris had met in the Champ de Mars, and demanded the dethronement of the king; then, that Danton had audaciously informed the representatives of France that their refusal to declare the throne vacant would be the signal for a general insurrection. After this, no national calamity could surprise the loyal colonists, Toussaint said; for the fate of Louis as a king, if not as a man, was decided. Accordingly, there followed humiliations, deposition, imprisonment, during which little could be known of the mind, and even of the condition of the king; and those who would have served him remained in anxious suspense.

It happened, one warm day in the spring, when every trace of the winter hail-storms had passed away, that the whole party were amusing themselves in trying to collect enough of the ripening sea-side grape for a feast. The bright round leaves were broad and abundant; but the clusters of the fruit were yet only of a pale yellow, and a berry here and there was all that was fit for gathering. The grape-gathering was little more than a pretense for basking in the sun, or for lounging in the shade of the abundant verdure, which seemed to have been sown by the hurricane and watered by the wintry surf, so luxuriantly did it spring from the sands and the salt waves. The stately manchineel overhung the tide; the mangroves sprang out of the waters; the sea-side grape overspread the sands with a thick green carpet, and kept them cool; so that, as the human foot sought the spot, the glittering lizards forsook it, and darted away to seek the hot face

of the rock. For full half a mile this patch of verdure spread; and over this space were dispersed Margot and her household, when Toussaint crossed the ridge on one of his frequent visits. As he descended he heard laughter and singing, and among the singing voices the cracked pipe of old Dessalines. Toussaint grieved to interrupt this mirth, and to think that he must leave dull and sad those whom he found so gay. But he came with bad news and on a mournful errand, and there was no help for it.

As he pricked on his horse toward the party, the young people set up a shout and began to run toward him, but stopped short on seeing how unusually large a train he brought. Five or six mounted soldiers, instead of one, followed him this time, and they led several horses.

"Oh, you are come to take us home!" cried Margot, joyfully, as she met him.

He shook his head as he replied,

"No, Margot, not yet. But the time may come."

"I wish you could tell us when it would come," said Dessalines. "It is all very well gathering these things, and calling them grapes for want of better; but give me the grapes that yield one wine. I wonder who has been gathering the grapes from my trellis all this time, while the whole rainy season through not a drop did I taste? I wish you had left your revolutions and nonsense till after my time, that I might have sat under my own vine and my own fig-tree, as the priest says, till the end of my days."

"Indeed I wish so too, Dessalines. But you shall have some wine."

"Ay, send us some. Jacques will tell you what I like. Don't forget, Toussaint Breda. They talk of palm-wine in the season; but I do not believe we shall get any worth drinking from the palms hereabout."

"What is the matter with our palms?" cried Moysé, firing up for the honor of the northern coast. "I will get you a cabbage for dinner every day for a month to come," he added, moderating his tone under his uncle's eye; "every day, till you say that our palms, too, are as good as any you have in the plain: and as for palm-wine, when the season comes—"

"No, let me—let me cut the cabbage!" cried Denis. "I can climb as quick as a monkey now—a hundred feet in two minutes. Let me climb the palmetto, Moysé."

"First take back my horse to those soldiers, my boy," said his father, setting Denis upon his horse, "and then let us all sit down here in the shade."

"All those horses," said Margot, anxiously: "what is to be done with them to-day? There are so many!"

"They will return presently," replied her husband. "I am not going to stay with you to-day. And, Margot, I shall take the lads with me if they are disposed to go."

"The lads! my boys!"

"Yes," said Toussaint, throwing himself down in the shade. "Our country and its people are orphaned; and the youngest of us must now make himself a soldier, that he may be ready for any turn of affairs which Providence may appoint. Do you hear, my boys?"

"Yes, father," answered Placide, in an earnest tone.

"They have then murdered the king!" asked Margot; "or did he die of his imprisonment?"

"They brought him to trial and executed him. The apes plucked down the evening star and quenched it. We have no king. We and our country are orphaned."

After a pause, Paul said,

"It is enough to make one leave one's fish and take up a gun."

"I rejoice to hear you say so, brother," said Toussaint.

"Then, father, you will let me go," cried Moysé. "You will give me your gun, and let me go to the camp."

"Yes, Moysé; rather you than I. You are a stout lad now, and I know nothing of camps. You shall take the gun, and I will stay and fish."

"Leave your father his gun if he chooses to remain, Moysé. We will find arms for you. Placide! Isaac!" he continued, looking from the one to the other of his sons.

"And Denis," cried the boy, placing himself directly in his father's eye, as he returned breathless from the discharge of his errand.

"Yes, my boy, by-and-by, when you are as strong as Placide. You shall come to the camp when we want you."

"I will go to-day, father," said Placide.

"What to do?" said Isaac. "I do not understand."

Other eyes besides Aimée's were fixed on Toussaint's face, in anxiety for his reply.

"I do not know, my son, what we are to do next. When the parent of a nation dies, it may take some time to decide what is the duty of those who feel themselves bereaved. All I now am sure of is, that it can not but be right for my children to be fitted to serve their country in any way that they may find to be appointed. I wish to train you to arms, and the time has come. Do not you think so?"

Isaac made no direct reply, and Aimée had strong hopes that he was prepared with some wise, unanswerable reason for remaining where he was. Meantime, his father proceeded,

"In all that I have done, in all that I now say, I have the sanction of Father Laxabon."

"Then all is right, we may be sure," said Margot. "I have no doubt you would be right if you had not Father Laxabon to consult; but, if he thinks you right, every thing must be done as you wish. My boys," pursued the tearful mother, "you must go with your father: you hear Father Laxabon thinks so."

"Do you think so?" whispered Aimée to Isaac.

He pressed her arm, which was within his, in token of silence, while his father went on:

"You heard the proclamation I sent out among our people a few weeks ago."

"Yes," said Placide; "that in which you tell them that you prefer serving with Spaniards who own a king, than with French who own none."

"Yes. I have had to make the same declaration to the two commissaries who have arrived at Cap under orders from the regicides at Paris. These commissaries have to-day invited me to their standard by promises of favor and consideration."

"What do they promise us?" asked Margot, eagerly.

"Nothing that we can accept. I have written a letter in reply, saying that I can not yield myself to the will of any member of the nation, seeing that, since nations began, obedience has been due only to kings. We have lost the King of France; but we are beloved by the monarch of Spain, who faithfully rewards our services, and never intermits his protection and indulgence. Thus, I can not acknowledge the authority of these commissaries till they shall have enthroned a king. Such is the letter which, guided by Father Laxabon, I have written."

"It is a beautiful letter, I am sure," said Margot. "Is it not, Paul?"

"I don't doubt Father Laxabon is right," said Dessalines; "only I do not see the use of having a king, if people are turned out of house and home for being loyal, as we all are. If we had not cared any thing about the king's quarrel, we might have been under our vines at home, as I have often said before."

"And how would it have been with us here?" said Toussaint, laying his hand on his breast.

"Put your hand a little lower, and I say it would have been all the better for us," said the old negro, laughing; "for we should not have gone without wine all this time."

"What do you think?" Aimée, as usual, asked Isaac.

"I think it was good for my father to be loyal to the king, as long as the king lived. I think it was good for us to be living here free, with time to consider what we should do next. And I think it has happened very well that my father has shown what a soldier he is, which he could not so well have done if we had staid at Breda. As for Dessalines, he is best where the vines grow thickest or where the cellars are deepest. It is a pity he should have taken upon him to be loyal."

"And what do you think of going to the camp with my father? Look at Moysé—how delighted he is!"

Moysé certainly did look possessed with joy. He was rapidly telling all his warlike intentions to Génifrède, who was looking in his face with a countenance of fear and grief.

"You think nothing of us," she cried at length, giving way to a passion of tears. "We have been so happy here all together; and now you

are glad to go and leave us behind. You will go and fight, without caring for us; you will be killed in this horrid war, and we shall never see you again—we shall never know what has become of you."

Moyse's military fire was instantly quenched. It immediately appeared to him the greatest of miseries to have to leave his cousins. He assured Génifrède he could not really intend to go. He had only been fancying what a war with the white masters would be. He hated the whites heartily; but he loved this place much more. Placide and Isaac might go, but he would stay. Nothing should part him from those he loved best.

Toussaint was not unmindful of what was passing. Génifrède's tones of distress and Moyse's protestations all reached his ear. He turned, and gently drew his daughter toward him.

"My child," said he, "we are no longer what we have been—slaves, whose strength is in the will of their masters. We are free; and to be free requires a strong heart, in women as well as in men. When M. Bayou was our master, we rose and slept every day alike, and went out to our work and came in to our food without having to think of any thing beyond. Now we are free, and God has raised us to the difficult duties which we have always revered in the whites. We men must leave our homes to live in camps, and, if necessary, to fight; and you, women and girls, must make it easy for us to do our duty. You must be willing to see us go; glad to spare us; and you must pray to God that we may not return till our duty is done."

"I can not. I shall not," Génifrède muttered to herself, as she cast down her eyes under her father's compassionate gaze. He looked toward Aimée, who answered, with tearful eyes,

"Yes, father. They must go, and we will not hinder them; but they will soon be back, will not they?"

"That depends on how soon we can make good soldiers of them," said he, cheerfully.

"Come, Moyse, have you changed your mind again? or will you stay and plait hammocks, while my boys are trained to arms?"

"I shall not stay behind if the others go. But why should not we all go together? I am sure there is room enough in yonder valley for all the people on this coast."

"Room enough; but my family are better beside your father than among soldiers and the hunters of the mountains. Stay with them, or go with me. Shoot ducks and pick up shell-fish here, or go with me, and prepare to be General Moyse some day."

Moyse looked as if he would have knocked his uncle down at the supposition that he would stay to pick up shell-fish. He could not but laugh, however, at hearing himself greeted as General Moyse by all the boys; and even Génifrède smiled.

Margot moved sighing toward the rocks, to put up for her boys such comforts as she could muster, and to prepare the meal which they

must have before they went. Her girls went with her, and Denis shouted after them that he was to get the cabbage from the palmetto; adding, that if they gave him a good knife, he would take it off as neatly as the Paris people took off the king's head. His father grasped his arm and said,

"Never name the king, my boy, till you feel grieved that you have lost him. You do not know what you say. Remember, never mention the king unless we ask you."

Denis was glad to run after his cabbage. His father remembered to praise it at dinner. No one else praised or liked any thing. Margot and Aimée were tearful; Génifrède was gloomy. The lads could think of nothing but the new life before them, which yet they did not like to question their father about till they should have left their tears behind. No sooner were they past the first turn up the ridge, than they poured out their inquiries as to life in the camp and the prospects of the war. Their eager gestures were watched by those they left behind; and there was a feeling of mortification in each woman's heart, on seeing this evidence that home was already forgotten for busier scenes. They persuaded themselves, and believed of each other, that their grief was for the fearful death of the king; and they spoke as if this had been really the case.

"We have no one to look up to now," said Margot, sobbing; "no one to protect us. Who would have thought, when I married, how desolate we should be one day on the sea-shore, with our master at Baltimore, and the king dead, and no king likely to come after him! What will become of us?"

"But, Margot," interposed Dessalines, "how should we be better off at this moment if the king were alive and flourishing at Paris?"

"How!" repeated Margot, indignantly. "Why, he would have been our protector, to be sure. He would have done some fine thing for my husband, considering what my husband has done for him. If our beloved king (on his throne) knew of my husband's victory at Plaisance, and of his expedition to St. Marc, and of his keeping quiet all these plantations near Marmalade, and of the thousands that he has brought over from the rebels, do you think a good master like the king would have left us to pine here among the rocks, while Jean Français is boasting all day long as if he had done every thing with his own hand? No; our good king would never let Jean Français's wife dress herself in the best jewels the white ladies left behind, while the wife and daughters of his very best officer are living here in a hut, on a rock, with no other clothes to wear than they brought away from Breda. No, no; as my husband says, in losing the king we are orphans."

"I can get you as good clothes as ever Jean's wife wore, Margot," said Paul, whose soft heart was touched by her grief. "I can run my boat along to a place I know of, where there

are silks and trinkets to be had, as well as brandy. I will bring you and the girls some pretty dresses, Margot."

"No, Paul, not here. We can not wear them here. And we shall have no pleasure in any thing, now we have lost the only one who could take care of us. And who knows whether we shall ever see our boys again?"

"Curse the war!" muttered Paul, wiping his brows.

"Mother," said Aimée, in a low voice, "have we not God to protect us still? One master may desert us, and another may die; but there is still God above all. Will not he protect us?"

"Yes, my dear. God takes care of the world; but then he takes care of our enemies as well as of us."

"Does he?" exclaimed Denis, in a tone of surprise.

"Yes; ask your father if Father Laxabon does not say so. The name of God is forever in the mouths of the whites at Cap: but they reviled the king; and, true enough, the king was altogether on our side—we had all his protection."

"All that is a good deal changed now, I hear," said Paul. "The whites at Cap are following the example of the rebels at Paris, and do not rely upon God as on their side, as they used to do."

"Will God leave off taking care of them, then," asked Denis, "and take care only of us?"

"No," said Aimée. "God is willing, Isaac says, to take care of all men, whether they serve him or not."

Denis shook his head, as if he did not quite approve this.

"Our priest told Isaac," continued Aimée, "that God sends his rain on the just and on the unjust. And do not you know that he does? When the rains come next month, will they not fall on all the plantations of the plain, as well as in the valley where the camp is? Our water-falls will be all the fresher and brighter for the rains, and so will the springs in Cap."

"But if he is every body's master, and takes care of every body," said Denis, "what is all this fighting about? We are not fighting for him, are we?"

"Your father is," said Margot; "for God is always on the side of kings. Father Laxabon says so."

The boy looked puzzled till Aimée said,

"I think there would be none of this fighting if every body tried to please God and serve him, as is due to a master—as father did for the king. God does not wish that men should fight. So our priest at Breda told Isaac."

"Unless wicked rebels force them to it, as your father is forced," said Margot.

"I suppose so," said Aimée, "by Isaac's choosing to go."

CHAPTER VI.

THE HOUR.

THE lads found some of the details of military training less heroic and less ageeable than they had imagined; scarcely to be compared, indeed, under either aspect, to the chase of the wild goats and search for young turtle to which they had been of late accustomed. They had their pleasures, however, amidst the heats, toils, and laborious offices of the camp. They felt themselves men, living among men: they were young enough to throw off, and almost to forget, the habits of thought which belong to slavery; and they became conscious of a spirit growing up within them, by which they could look before and after, perceive that the future of their lives was in their own hands, and therefore understand the importance of the present time. Their father looked upon them with mixed feelings of tender pride in them, and regret for his own lost youth. The strong and busy years on which they were entering had been all spent by him in acquiring one habit of mind, to which his temperament and his training alike conduced—a habit of endurance. It was at this time that he had acquired the power of reading enough to seek for books: and the books that he had got hold of were Epictetus, and some fragments of Fénelon. With all the force of youth, he had been by turns the Stoic and the Quietist; and, while busied in submitting himself to the pressure of the present, he had turned from the past, and scarcely dreamed of the future. If his imagination glanced back to the court of his royal grandfather, held under the palm shades, or pursuing the lion-hunt amidst the jungles of Africa, he had hastily withdrawn his mind's eye from scenes which might create impatience of his lot; and if he ever wondered whether a long succession of ignorant and sensual blacks were to be driven into the field by the whip every day in St. Domingo for evermore, he had cut short the speculation as inconsistent with his stoical habit of endurance and his Christian principle of trust. It was not till his youth was past that he had learned any thing of the revolutions of the world—too late to bring them into his speculations and his hopes. He had read, from year to year, of the conquests of Alexander and of Cæsar: he had studied the wars of France, and drawn the plans of campaigns in the sand before his door till he knew them by heart; but it had not occurred to him that, while empires were overthrown in Asia, and Europe was traversed by powers which gave and took its territories, as he saw the negroes barter their cocoa-nuts and plantains on Saturday nights—while such things had happened in another hemisphere, it had not occurred to him that change would ever happen in St. Domingo. He had heard of earthquakes taking place at intervals of hundreds of years, and he knew that the times of the hurricane were not calculable; but, patient and still as

was his own existence, he had never thought whether there might not be a convulsion of human affections, a whirlwind of human passion, preparing under the grim order of society in the colony. If a master died, his heir succeeded him; if the "force" of any plantation was by any conjuncture of circumstances dispersed or removed, another negro company was on the shore, ready to repeople the slave-quarter. The mutabilities of human life had seemed to him to be appointed to whites—to be their privilege and their discipline; while he doubted not that the eternal command to blacks was to bear and forbear. When he now looked upon his boys, and remembered that for them this order was broken up, and in time for them to grasp a future and prepare for it; that theirs was the lot of whites, in being involved in social changes, he regarded them with a far deeper solicitude and tenderness than in the darkest midnight hours of their childish illnesses, or during the sweetest prattle of their Sabbath afternoons, and with a far stronger hopefulness than can ever enter the heart or home of a slave. They had not his habitual patience, and he saw that they were little likely to attain it; but they daily manifested qualities and powers—enterprise, forecast, and aspiration of various kinds, adorning their youth with a promise which made their father sigh at the retrospect of his own. He was amused, at the same time, to see in them symptoms of a boyish vanity, to which he had either not been prone, or which he had early extinguished. He detected in each the secret eagerness with which they looked forward to displaying their military accomplishments to those with whom they were always exchanging thoughts over the ridge. He foresaw that when they should have improved a little in certain exercises, he should be receiving hints about a visit to the shore, and that there would then be such a display upon the sands as should excite prodigious admiration, and make Denis break his heart that he must not go to the camp.

Meantime, he amused them in the evenings, with as many of his officers as chose to look on, by giving them the history of the wars of Asia and Europe, as he had learned it from books, and thoroughly mastered it by reflection. Night after night was the map of Greece traced with his sword's point on the sand behind his tent, while he related the succession of the conflicts with Persia with a spirit derived from old Herodotus himself. Night after night did the interest of his hearers arouse more and more spirit in himself, till he became aware that his sympathies with the Greeks in their struggles for liberty had hitherto been like those of the poet born blind, who delights in describing natural scenery—thus unconsciously enjoying the stir within him of powers whose appropriate exercise is forbidden. Amidst this survey of the regions of history, he felt, with humble wonder, that while his boys were like bright-eyed children sporting fearlessly in the fields, he was like one

lately couched, by whom the order of things was gradually becoming recognized, but who was oppressed by the unwonted light, and inwardly ashamed of the hesitation and uncertainty of his tread. While sons, nephew, and a throng of his officers were listening to him as to an oracle, and following the tracings of his sword, as he showed how this advance and that retreat had been made above two thousand years ago, he was full of consciousness that the spirit of the history of freedom was received more truly by the youngest of his audience than by himself; that he was learning from their natural ardor something of higher value than all that he had to impart.

As he was thus engaged late one spring evening—late, because the rains would soon come on, and suspend all outdoor meetings—he was stopped in the midst of explaining a diagram by an authoritative tap on the shoulder. Roused by an appeal to his attention now so unusual, he turned quickly, and saw a black, who beckoned him away.

"Why can not you speak? Or do you take me for some one else? Speak your business."

"I can not," said the man, in a voice which, though too low to be heard by any one else, Toussaint knew to be Papalier's. "I can not speak here; I must not make myself known. Come this way."

Great was the surprise of the group at seeing Toussaint instantly follow this black, who appeared in the dusk to be meanly clothed. They entered the tent, and let down the curtain at the entrance. Some saw that a woman stood within the folds of the tent.

"Close the tent," said Papalier, in the same low tone in which he had been wont to order his plate to be changed at home. "And now give me some water to wash off this horrid daubing. Some water—quick! Pah! I have felt as if I were really a negro all this day."

Toussaint said nothing, nor did he summon any one. He saw it was a case of danger, led the way into the inner part of the tent, poured out water, pointed to it, and returned to the table, where he sat down, to await further explanation.

Papalier at length re-appeared, looking like himself, even as to his clothes, which Thérèse must have brought in the bundle which she carried. She now stood leaning against one of the tent-poles, looking grievously altered—worn and wearied.

"Will you not sit down, Thérèse?" said Toussaint, pointing to a chair near his own, Papalier having seated himself on the other side of the table.

Thérèse threw herself on a couch at some distance, and hid her face.

"I must owe my safety to you again, Toussaint," said Papalier. "I understand General Hermona is here at present?"

"He is."

"You have influence with him, and you must use it for me."

"I am sorry you need it. I hoped you would have taken advantage of the reception he gave you, to learn the best time and manner of going to Europe. I hoped you had been at Paris long ago."

"I ought to have been there. If I had properly valued my life, I should have been there. But it seemed so inconceivable that things should have reached a worse pass than when I crossed the frontier! It seemed so incredible that I should not be able to preserve any wreck of my property for my children, that I have lingered on, staying month after month, till now I can not get away. I have had a dreadful life of it. I had better have been anywhere else. Why, even Thérèse," he continued, pointing over his shoulder toward the couch, "Thérèse, who would not be left behind at Fort Egalité the night we came from Breda—even Thérèse has not been using me as she should do. I believe she hates me."

"You are in trouble, and therefore I will not speak with you to-night about Thérèse," said Toussaint. "You are in danger from the determination of the Spaniards to deliver up the enemies of the late king to—"

"Rather say to deliver up the masters to their revolted slaves. They make politics the pretense; but they would not be sorry to see us all cut to pieces, like poor Odéluc and Clement, and fifty more."

"However that may be, your immediate danger is from the Spaniards—is it?"

"Yes; I discovered that I was to be sent over the line to-morrow, so I was obliged to get here to-day in any way I could; and there was no other way than—pah! it was horrid."

"No other way than by looking like a negro," said Toussaint, calmly. "Well, now you are here, what do you mean to do next?"

"I mean, by your influence with General Hermona, to obtain protection to a port, that I may proceed to Europe. I do not care whether I go from St. Domingo or by St. Iago, so as to sail from Port Plate. I could find a vessel from either port. You would have no difficulty in persuading General Hermona to this."

"I hope not, as he voluntarily gave you permission to enter this territory. I will ask for his safe-conduct in the morning. To-night you are safe, if you remain here. I request that you will take possession of the inner apartment, and rely upon my protection."

"Thank you. I knew my best way was to come here," said Papalier, rising. "Thérèse will bring me some refreshment; and then I shall be glad of rest, for we traveled half last night."

"For how many shall the safe-conduct be?" asked Toussaint, who had also risen. "For yourself alone, or more?"

"No one knows better than you," said Papalier, hastily, "that I have only one servant left," pointing again to the couch. "And," lowering his voice so that Thérèse could not hear, "she, poor thing, is dreadfully altered,

you see; has never got over the loss of her child that night." Then raising his voice again, he pursued, "My daughters at Paris will be glad to see Thérèse, I know; and she will like Paris, as every body does. All my other people are irrecoverable, I fear, but Thérèse goes with me."

"No," said Thérèse, from the couch, "I will go nowhere with you."

"Heyday! what is that?" said Papalier, turning in the direction of the voice. "Yes, you will go, my dear. You are tired to-night, as you well may be. You feel as I do—as if you could not go anywhere to-morrow or the next day. But we shall be rested and ready enough when the time comes."

"I am ready at this moment to go anywhere else—anywhere away from you," replied Thérèse.

"What do you mean, Thérèse?" asked her master, sharply.

"I mean what you said just now—that I hate you."

"Oh! silence!" exclaimed Toussaint. He then added, in a mild tone, to Thérèse, "This is my house, in which God is worshiped and Christ adored, and where, therefore, no words of hatred may be spoken." He then addressed himself to Papalier, saying, "You have, then, fully resolved that it is less dangerous to commit yourself to the Spaniards than to attempt to reach Cap?"

"To reach Cap! What! after the decree? Upon my soul, Toussaint, I never doubted you yet; but if—"

He looked Toussaint full in the face.

"I betray no one," said Toussaint. "What decree do you speak of?"

"That of the Convention of the 4th of February last."

"I have not heard of it."

"Then it is as I hoped; that decree is not considered here as of any importance. I trusted it would be so. It is merely a decree of the Convention, confirming and proclaiming the liberty of the negroes, and declaring the colony henceforth an integral part of France. It is a piece of folly and nonsense, as you will see at once; for it can never be enforced. No one of any sense will regard it; but just at present it has the effect, you see, of making it out of the question for me to cross the frontier."

"True," said Toussaint, in a voice which made Papalier look in his face, which was working with some strong emotion. He turned away from the light, and desired Thérèse to follow him. He would commit her to the charge of one of the sutlers' wives for the night.

Having put on the table such fruit, bread, and wine as remained from his own meal (Papalier forbidding further preparation, for fear of exciting observation without), Toussaint went out with Thérèse, committed her to safe hands, and then entered the tent next his own, inhabited by his sons, and gave them his accustomed

blessing. On his return he found that Papalier had retired.

Toussaint was glad to be alone. Never had he more needed solitude; for rarely, if ever, in the course of his life, had his calm soul been so disturbed. During the last words spoken by Papalier, a conviction had flashed across him, more vivid and more tremendous than any lightning which the skies of December had sent forth to startle the bodily eye; and amidst the storm which those words had roused within him, that conviction continued to glare forth at intervals, refusing to be quenched. It was this: that if it were indeed true that the revolutionary Government of France had decreed to the negroes the freedom and rights of citizenship, to fight against the revolutionary Government would be henceforth to fight against the freedom and rights of his race. The consequences of such a conviction were overpowering to his imagination. As one inference after another presented itself before him—as a long array of humiliations and perplexities showed themselves in the future—he felt as if his heart was bursting. For hour after hour of that night he paced the floor of his tent; and if he rested his limbs, so unused to tremble with fear or toil, it was while covering his face with his hands, as if even the light of the lamp disturbed the intensity of his meditation. A few hours may, at certain crises of the human mind and lot, do the work of years; and this night carried on the education of the noble soul, long repressed by slavery, to a point of insight which multitudes do not reach in a lifetime. No doubt the preparation had been making through years of forbearance and meditation, and through the latter months of enterprise and activity; but yet the change of views and purposes was so great as to make him feel, between night and morning, as if he were another man.

The lamp burned out, and there was no light but from the brilliant flies, a few of which had found their way into the tent. Toussaint made his repeater strike; it was three o'clock. As his mind grew calm under the settlement of his purposes, he became aware of the thirst which his agitation had excited. By the light of the flitting tapers he poured out water, refreshed himself with a deep draught, and then addressed himself to his duty. He could rarely endure delay in acting on his convictions. The present was a case in which delay was treachery, and he would not lose an hour. He would call up Father Laxabon, and open his mind to him, that he might be ready for action when the camp should awake.

As he drew aside the curtain of the tent, the air felt fresh to his heated brow, and, with the calm starlight, seemed to breathe strength and quietness into his soul. He stood for a moment listening to the dash and gurgle of the river as it ran past the camp—the voice of waters, so loud to the listening ear, but so little heeded amidst the hum of the busy hours of day.

It now rose above the chirpings and buzzings of reptiles and insects, and carried music to the ear and spirit of him who had so often listened at Breda to the fall of water in the night hours, with a mind unburdened and unperplexed with duties and with cares. The sentinel stopped before the tent with a start which made his arms ring, at seeing the entrance open and some one standing there.

"Watch that no one enters," said Toussaint to him. "Send for me to Father Laxabon's if I am wanted."

As he entered the tent of the priest—a tent so small as to contain only one apartment—all seemed dark. Laxabon slept so soundly as not to awake till Toussaint had found the tinder-box and was striking a light.

"In the name of Christ, who is there?" cried Laxabon.

"I, Toussaint Breda—entreating your pardon, father."

"Why are you here, my son? There is some misfortune, by your face. You look wearied and anxious. What is it?"

"No misfortune, father, and no crime. But my mind is anxious, and I have ventured to break your rest. You will pardon me?"

"You do right, my son. We are ready for service, in season and out of season."

While saying this, the priest had risen and thrown on his morning-gown. He now seated himself at the table, saying,

"Let us hear. What is this affair of haste?"

"The cause of my haste is this—that I may probably not again have conversation with you, father; and I desire to confess, and be absolved by you once more."

"Good. Some dangerous expedition; is it not so?"

"No. The affair is personal altogether. Have you heard of any decree of the French Convention, by which the negroes—the slaves—of the colony of St. Domingo are freely accepted as fellow-citizens, and the colony declared an integral part of France?"

"Surely I have. The general was speaking of it last night; and I brought away a copy of the proclamation consequent upon it. Let me see," said he, rising, and taking up the lamp; "where did I put that proclamation?"

"With your sacred books, perhaps, father; for it is a gospel to me and my race."

"Do you think it of so much importance?" asked Laxabon, returning to the table with the newspaper containing the proclamation, officially given. "The general does not seem to think much of it, nor does Jean François."

"To a commander of our allies the affair may appear a trifle, father; and such white planters as can not refuse to hear the tidings may scoff at them; but Jean François, a negro and a slave—is it possible that he makes light of this?"

"He does: but he has read it, and you have not. Read it, my son, and without prejudice." Toussaint read it again and again.

"Well!" said the priest, as Toussaint put down the paper, no longer attempting to hide with it the streaming tears which covered his face.

"Father," said he, commanding his voice completely, "is there not hope that if men, weakened and blinded by degradation, mistake their duty when the time for duty comes, they will be forgiven?"

"In what case, my son? Explain yourself."

"If I, hitherto a slave, and wanting, therefore, the wisdom of a free man, find myself engaged on the wrong side—fighting against the providence of God—is there not hope that I may be forgiven on turning to the right?"

"How the wrong side, my son? Are you not fighting for your king, and for the allies of France?"

"I have been so pledged and so engaged; and I do not say that I was wrong when I so engaged and so pledged myself. But if I had been as wise as a free man should be, I should have foreseen of late what has now happened, and not have been found, when last night's sun went down (and as to-morrow night's sun shall not find me), holding a command against the highest interests of my race, now, at length, about to be redeemed."

"You—Toussaint Breda—the loyal! If Heaven has put any of its grace within you, it has shown itself in your loyalty; and do you speak of deserting the forces raised in the name of your king, and acting upon the decrees of his enemies? Explain to me, my son, how this can be. It seems to me that I can scarcely be yet awake."

"And to me it seems, father, that never till now have I been awake. Yet it was in no vain dream that I served my king. If he is now where he can read the hearts of his servants, he knows that it was not for my command, or for any other dignity and reward, that I came hither, and have fought under the royal flag of France. It was from reverence and duty to him, under God. He is now in heaven; we have no king; and my loyalty is due elsewhere. I know not how it might have been if he had still lived: for it seems to me now that God has established a higher royalty among men than even that of an anointed sovereign over the fortunes of many millions of men. I think now that the rule which the free man has over his own soul, over time and eternity—subject only to God's will—is a nobler authority than that of kings; but, however I have thought, our king no longer lives; and, by God's mercy, as it seems to me now, while the hearts of the blacks feel orphaned and desolate, an object is held forth to us for the adoration of our loyalty—an object higher than throne and crown, and offered us by the hand of the King of kings."

"Do you mean freedom, my son? Remember that it is in the name of freedom that the French rebels have committed the crimes which—which it would consume the night to tell of,

and which no one knows better or abhors more than yourself."

"It is true; but they struggled for this, and that, and the other right and privilege existing in societies of those who are fully admitted to be men. In the struggle, crime has been victorious, and they have killed their king. The object of my devotion will now be nothing that has to be wrenched from an anointed ruler, nothing which can be gained by violence; nothing but that which, being already granted, requires only to be cherished, and may best be cherished in peace—the manhood of my race. To this must I henceforth be loyal."

"How can men be less slaves than the negroes of St. Domingo of late? No real change has taken place; and yet you, who wept that freedom as rebellion, are now proposing to add your force to it."

"And was it not rebellion? Some rose for the plunder of their masters—some from ambition—some from revenge—many to escape from a condition they had not patience to endure. All this was corrupt; and the corruption, though bred out of slavery, as the fever from the marshes, grieved my soul as if I had not known the cause. But now, knowing the cause, and others (knowing it also) having decreed that slavery is at an end, and given the sanction of law and national sympathy to our freedom—is not the case changed? Is it now a folly or a sin to desire to realize, and purify, and elevate this freedom, that those who were first slaves and then savages may at length become men; not in decrees and proclamations only, but in their own souls? You do not answer, father. Is it not so?"

"Open yourself farther, my son. Declare what you propose. I fear you are perplexing yourself."

"If I am deceived, father, I look for light from Heaven through you."

"I fear—I fear, my son! I do not find in you to-night the tone of humility and reliance upon religion in which you found comfort the first time you opened the conflicts of your heart to me. You remember that night, my son?"

"The first night of my freedom. Never shall I forget its agonies."

"I rejoice to hear it. Those agonies were safer, more acceptable to God, than the comforts of self-will."

"My father, if my will ensnares me, lay open the snare; I say not for the sake of my soul only, but for far, far more: for the sake of my children, for the sake of my race, for the glory of God in his dealings with men, bring me back if I stray."

"Well. Explain, explain what you propose."

"I can not remain in an army opposed to what are now the legal rights of the blacks."

"You will give up your command?"

"I shall."

"And your boys—what will you do with them?"

"Send them whence they came for the present. I shall dismiss them by one road, while the resignation of my rank goes by another—"

"And you yourself by a third?"

"When I have declared myself to General Hermona."

"Have you thoughts of taking your soldiers with you?"

"No."

"But what is right for you is right for them."

"If they so decide for themselves. My power over them is great. They would follow me with a word. I shall therefore avoid speaking that word, as it would be a false first step in a career of freedom, to make them enter upon it as slaves to my opinion and my will."

"But you will at least address them, that they may understand the course you pursue. The festival of this morning will afford an opportunity, after mass. Have you thought of this? I do not say that I am advising it, or sanctioning any part of your plan; but have you thought of this?"

"I have, and dismissed the thought. The proclamation will speak for itself. I act from no information which is not open to them all. They can act, thank God, for themselves; and I will not seduce them into subservience, or haste, or passion."

"But you will be giving up every thing. What can make you think that the French at Cap, all in the interest of the planters, will receive you?"

"I do not think it, and I shall not offer myself."

"Then you will sink into nothing. You will no longer be an officer, nor even a soldier. You will be a mere negro, where negroes are wholly despised. After all that you have been, you will be nothing."

"I shall be a true man."

"You will sink to less than nothing. You will be worse than useless before God and man. You will be held a traitor."

"I shall; but it will be for the sake of a higher fidelity."

There was a long pause, after which Laxabon said, in a tone half severe and half doubting,

"So here ends your career! You will dig a piece of ground to grow maize and plantains for your family; you will read history in your piazza, and see your daughters dance in the shade, while your name will never be mentioned but as that of a traitor. So here ends your career!"

"From no one so often as you, father, have I heard that man's career never ends."

The priest made no reply.

"How lately was it," pursued Toussaint, "that you encouraged my children, when they, who fear neither the wild bull nor the tornado, looked somewhat fearfully up to the eclipsed moon?" Who was it but you that told them, that though that blessed light seemed blotted out from the sky, it was not so; but that, be-

hind the black shadow, God's hand was still leading her on through the heaven, still pouring radiance into her lamp, not the less bright because it was hidden from men? A thick shadow is about to pass upon my name; but is it not possible, father, that God may still be feeding my soul with light—still guiding me toward himself? Will you not once more tell me that man's career never ends?"

"In a certain sense—in a certain sense, that is true, my son. But our career here is what God has put into our own hands; and it seems to me that you are throwing away his gift and his favor. How will you answer when he asks you, 'What hast thou done with the rank and the power I put into thy hand? How hast thou used them?' What can you then answer but 'I flung them away, and made myself useless and a reproach.' You know what a station you hold in this camp; how you are prized by the general for the excellence of the military discipline you have introduced; and by me, and all the wise and religious, for the sobriety of manners and purity of morals of which you are an example in yourself, and which you have cherished among your troops, so that your soldiers are the boast of the whole alliance. You know this—that you unite the influence of the priest with the power of the commander; and yet you are going to cast off both, with all the duties which belong to them, and sink yourself in infamy, and, with yourself, the virtues you have advocated. How will you answer this to God?"

"Father, was there not one in whose path lay all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, and who yet chose ignominy—to be despised by the world instead of to lead it? And was God severe with him? Forgive me, father; but have you not desired me to follow him, though far off as the eastern moon from the setting sun?"

"That was a case, my son, unique in the world. The Saviour had a lot of his own. Common men have rulers appointed them whom they are to serve; and, if in rank and honor, so much the greater the favor of God. You entered this service with an upright mind and pure intent; and here, therefore, can you most safely remain, instead of casting yourself down from the pinnacle of the temple, which, you know, the Son of God refused to do. Remember his words, 'Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.' Be not tempted yourself, by pride of heart, to compare your lot with that of Christ, which was unique."

"He devoted himself for the whole race of man; he, and he alone. But it seems to me that there may be periods of time when changes are appointed to take place among men—among nations, and even among races; and that a common man may then be called to devote himself for that nation or for that race. Father, I feel that the hour may be come for the negro race to be redeemed; and that I, a common man, may so far devote myself as not to stand in the

way of their redemption. I feel that I must step out from among those who have never admitted the negroes' claim to manhood. If God should open to me a way to serve the blacks better, I shall be found ready. Meantime, not for another day will I stand in the light of their liberties. Father," he continued, with an eagerness which grew as he spoke, "you know something of the souls of slaves. You know how they are smothered in the lusts of the body, how they are debased by the fear of man, how blind they are to the providence of God! You know how oppression has put out the eyes of their souls, and withered its sinews. If now, at length, a Saviour has once more for them stretched out his healing hand, and bidden them see, and arise and be strong, shall I resist the work? And you, father, will you not aid it? I would not presume; but if I might say all—"

"Say on, my son."

"Having reprov'd and raised the souls of slaves, would it not henceforth be a noble work for you to guide their souls as men? If you would come among us as a soldier of Christ, who is bound to no side in earthly quarrels; if you would come as to those who need you most, the lowest, the poorest, the most endangered, what a work may lie between this hour and your last! What may your last hour be, if, day by day, you have trained our souls in the glorious liberty of the children of God! The beginning must be lowly; but the kind heart of the Christian priest is lowly; and you would humble yourself first to teach men thus: 'You were wrong to steal'—'you were wrong to drink'—'you were wrong to take more wives than one, and to strike your children in passion.' Thus humbly must you begin; but among free men, how high may you not rise? Before you die, you may have led them to rule their own spirits, and, from the throne of that sovereignty, to look far into the depths of the heavens and over the history of the world; so that they may live in the light of God's countenance, and praise him almost like the angels: for, you know, he has made us, even us, but a little lower than they."

"This would be a noble work," said Laxabon, much moved; "and if God is really about to free your race, he will appoint a worthy servant for the office. My duty, however, lies here. I have here souls in charge, without being troubled with doubts as to the intentions of God and of men. As I told you, the general does not think so much as you do of this event; nor even does Jean François. If you act rashly, you will regret of ever having quitted the path of loyalty and duty. I warn you to pause, and see what course events will take. I admonish you not hastily to desert the path of loyalty and duty."

"If it had pleased God," said Toussaint, humbly, "to release me from the ignorance of slavery when he gave me freedom, I might now be able to lay open my heart as I desire to do;

I might declare the reasons which persuade me so strongly as I feel persuaded. But I am ignorant, and unskillful in reasoning with one like you, father."

"It is therefore that we are appointed to guide and help you, my son. You now know my mind, and have received my admonition. Let us proceed to confession; for the morning draws on toward the hour for mass."

"Father, I can not yield to your admonition. Reprove me as you will, I can not. There is a voice within me stronger than yours."

"I fear so, my son; nor can I doubt what that voice is, nor whence it comes. I will pray for you, that you may have strength to struggle with the tempter."

"Not so, father: rather pray that I may have strength to obey this new voice of duty, alone as I am, discountenanced as I shall be."

"Impossible, my son. I dare not so pray for one self-willed and precipitate; nor, till you bring an humble and obedient mind, can I receive your confession. There can be no absolute where there is reservation. Consider, my dear son! I only desire you to pause."

"Delay is treachery," said Toussaint. "This day the decree and proclamation will be made known through the forces; and if I remain, this night's sun sets on my condemnation. I shall not dare to pray, clothed in my rank, this night."

"Go now, my son. You see it is dawning. You have lost the present opportunity; and you must now leave me to my duties. When you can return hither to yours, you will be welcome."

Toussaint paid him his wonted reverence, and left the tent.

Arrived in his own, he threw himself on the couch like a heart-broken man.

"No help! no guidance!" thought he. "I am desolate and alone. I never thought to have been left without a guide from God. He leaves me with my sins upon my soul, unconfessed, unabsolved; and, thus burdened and rebuked, I must enter upon the course which I dare not refuse. But this voice within me which bids me go, whence and what is it? Whence is it, say that from God? And how can I, therefore, but that I am alone? There is no man that I can rely on; not even one of Christ's anointed priests; but is there not he who redeemed me? and will he reject me if, in my obedience, I come to him? I will try, I will dare. I am alone, and he will hear and help me."

Without priest, without voice, without form of words, he confessed and prayed, and no longer felt that he was alone. He arose, clear in mind and strong in heart; wrote and sealed up his resignation of his commission, stepped into the next tent to rouse the three boys, desiring them to dress for early mass, and prepare for their return to their homes immediately afterward. He then entered his own inner apartment, where Papalier was sleeping so soundly that it was probable the early movements of

saint's-day festivities in the camp would not awaken him. As he could not show himself abroad till the general's protection was secured, his host let him sleep on; opening and shutting his clothes'-chest, and going through the whole preparation for appearance on the parade in full uniform, without disturbing his wearied guest, who hardly moved even at the roll of the drum and the stir of morning in the camp.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ACT.

PAPALIER was probably the only person in the valley who did not attend mass on this saint's-day morning. The Spanish general was early seen, surrounded by his staff, moving toward the rising ground, outside the camp, on which stood the church, erected for the use of the troops when the encampment was formed. The soldiers, both Spanish and negro, had some time before filed out of their tents, and been formed for their short march; and they now came up in order, the whites approaching on the right, and the blacks on the left, till their forces joined before the church. The sun had not yet shone down into the valley, and the dew lay on the grass, and dropped like rain from the broad eaves of the church-roof—from the points of the palm-leaves with which it was thatched.

This church was little more than a covered inclosure. It was well shaded from the heat of the sun by its broad and low roof; but, between the corner posts, the sides could hardly be said to be filled in by the bamboos, which stood, like slender columns, at intervals of several inches, so that all that passed within could be seen from without, except that the vestry and the part behind the altar had their walls interwoven with withes, so as to be impervious to the eye. The ground was strewn thick with moss—cushioned throughout for the knees of the worshippers. The seats were rude wooden benches, except the chair, covered with damask, which was reserved for the Marquis d'Hermona.

Here the general took his place, his staff ranging themselves on the benches behind. Jean François entered after him, and seated himself on the opposite range of benches. Next followed Toussaint Breda, alone, having left his sons outside with the soldiers. Some few more advanced toward the altar; it being understood that those who did so wished to communicate. An interval of a few empty benches was then left, and the lower end of the church was thronged by such of the soldiery as could find room; the rest closing in round the building, so as to hear the voice of the priest and join in the service.

There was a gay air about the assemblage, scarcely subdued by the place and the occasion which brought them to it. Almost every man carried a stem of the white amaryllis, plucked

from among the high grass, with which it grew thickly intermixed all over the valley; and beautiful to the eye were the snowy, drooping blossoms, contrasting with the rich dark green of their leaves. Some few brought twigs of the orange and the lime; and the sweet odor of the blossoms pervaded the place like a holy incense, as the first stirring airs of morning breathed around and through the building. There were smiles on almost every face; and a hum of low but joyous greetings was heard without, till the loud voice of the priest, reciting the Creed, hushed every other. The only countenance of great seriousness present was that of Toussaint; and his bore an expression of solemnity, if not of melancholy, which struck every one who looked upon him—and he always was looked upon by every one. His personal qualities had strongly attracted the attention of the Spanish general. Jean François watched his every movement with the mingled triumph and jealousy of a superior in rank, but a rival in fame; and by the negro troops he was so beloved, that nothing but the strict discipline which he enforced could have prevented their following him in crowds wherever he went. Whenever he smiled, as he passed along in conversation, they laughed without inquiring why; and now, this morning, on observing the gravity of his countenance, they glanced from one to another, as if to inquire the cause.

The priest, having communicated, at length descended from before the altar, to administer the wafer to such as desired to receive it. Among these, Toussaint bent his head lowest; so low, that the first slanting snubbeam that entered beneath the thatch seemed to rest upon his head, while every other head remained in the shadow of the roof. In after days, the negroes then present recalled this appearance. Jean François, observing that General Hermona was making some remark about Toussaint to the officers about him, endeavored to assume an expression of devotion also, but in vain. No one thought of saying of him what the general was at that moment saying of his brother in arms: "God could not visit a soul more pure."

When the blessing had been given, and the few concluding verses of Scripture read, the general was the first to leave his place. It seemed as if he and Toussaint moved toward one another by the same impulse, for they met in the aisle between the benches.

"I have a few words of business to speak with you, general; a work of justice to ask you to perform without delay," said Toussaint.

"Good!" said the general. "In justice there should be no delay. I will therefore breakfast with you in your tent. Shall we proceed?"

He put his arm within that of Toussaint, who, however, gently withdrew his, and stepped back with a profound bow of respect. General Hermona looked as if he scarcely knew whether to take this as an act of humility or to be offended; but he smiled on Toussaint's saying,

"It is not without reasons that I decline honor in this place this morning—reasons which I will explain. Shall I conduct you to my tent? And these gentlemen of your staff?"

"As we have business, my friend, I will come alone. I shall be sorry if there is any quarrel between us, Toussaint. If you have to ask justice of me, I declare to you I know not the cause."

"It is not for myself, general, that I ask justice. I have ever received from you more than justice."

"You have attached your men to yourself with singular skill," said the general, on their way down the slope from the church, as he closely observed the countenances of the black soldiers, which brightened, as if touched by the sunlight, on the approach of their commander. "Their attachment to you is singular. I no longer wonder at your achievements in the field."

"It is by no skill of mine," replied Toussaint; "it is by the power of past tyranny. The hearts of negroes are made to love. Hitherto, all love in which the mind could share has been bestowed upon those who degraded and despised them. In me they see one whom, while obeying, they may love as a brother."

"The same might be said of Jean Français, as far as your reasons go; but Jean Français is not beloved like you. He looks gayer than you, my friend, notwithstanding. He is happy in his new rank, probably. You have heard that he is ennobled by the court of Spain?"

"I had not heard it. It will please him."

"It evidently does. He is made a noble; and his military rank is now that of lieutenant-general. Your turn will come next, my friend; and if promotion went strictly according to personal merit, no one would have been advanced sooner than you."

"I do not desire promotion, and—"

"Ah! there your stoical philosophy comes in. But I will show you another way of applying it. Rank brings cares; so that one who is not a stoic may have an excuse for shrinking from it; but a stoic despises cares. Ha! we have some young soldiers here," he said, as Moysé and his cousins stood beside the way to make their obeisance; "and very perfect soldiers they look, young as they are. They seem born for military service."

"They were born slaves, my lord; but they have now the loyal hearts of freemen within them, amidst the ignorance and follies of their youth."

"They are—"

"My nephew and my two sons, my lord."

"And why mounted at this hour?"

"They are going to their homes, by my direction."

"If it were not that you have business with me, which I suppose you desire them not to overhear—"

"It is as you say, general."

"If it had not been so, I would have request-

ed that they might be at our table this morning. As it is, I will not delay their journey."

And the general touched his hat to the lads, with a graciousness which made them bend low their uncovered heads, and report marvels at home of the deportment of the Marquis d'Hermona. Seeing how their father was occupied, they were satisfied with a grasp of his hand as he passed, received from him a letter for their mother, and waited only till he and his guest had disappeared within the tent to gallop off. They wondered at being made the bearers of a letter, as they knew that his horse was ordered to be ready beside his tent immediately after breakfast, and had not a doubt of his arriving at the shore almost as soon as themselves.

Papalier was lounging on the couch beside the table where breakfast was spread when General Hermona and his host entered. He started up, casting a look of doubt upon Toussaint.

"Fear nothing, M. Papalier," said Toussaint; "General Hermona has engaged to listen to my plea for justice. My lord, M. Papalier was amicably received by your lordship on crossing the frontier, and, on the strength of your welcome, has remained on the island till too late to escape, without your especial protection—a fate he dreads."

"You mean being delivered up as a republican?"

"Into the hands of my own negroes, my lord," said Papalier, bitterly. "That is the fate secretly designed for any unfortunate planter who may yet have survived the recent troubles over the frontier."

"But how can I protect you? The arrangement is none of mine; I can not interfere with it."

"Only by forgetting, in this single instance, the point of time at which we have arrived, and furnishing me with a pass which shall enable me to sail for Europe, as I acknowledge I ought to have done long ago."

"So this is the act of justice you asked from me, Toussaint! Why did you not say favor? I shall do it with much more pleasure as a slight favor to one whom I strongly regard. You shall have your safe-conduct, M. Papalier. In the mean time—"

And he looked toward the steaming chocolate and the piles of fruit on the table as if his appetite was growing urgent.

"One word more, my lord, before offering you my welcome to my table," said Toussaint. "I beseech you to consider the granting this pass as an act of justice, or of any thing rather than favor to me. Yesterday I would have accepted a hundred favors from you; to-day, with equal respect, I must refuse even one. I pledge myself to tell you why before you rise from table, to which I now invite you."

"I do not understand all this, Toussaint."

"I have pledged myself to explain."

"And you say there is no personal feeling—no offense between us?"

"If any, my lord, I alone am the offender. Will you be pleased to—"

"Oh yes, I will breakfast, and was never more ready. M. Papalier, our morning mass has kept you waiting, I fear."

Papalier seated himself, but was near starting up again when he saw his negro host preparing to take his place between his two guests. Papalier had never yet sat at table with a negro, and his impulse was to resent the necessity; but a stern look from the general warned him to submit quietly to the usages of the new state of society which he had remained to witness; and he sat through the meal, joining occasionally in the conversation, which, for his sake, was kept clear of subjects which might annoy him.

As soon as the servants, after producing pen, ink, and paper, had withdrawn, the general wrote a safe-conduct, and delivered it to M. Papalier, with an intimation that an attendant should be ready to guide him to the nearest port at his earliest convenience. Papalier understood this as it was meant—as a hint that there must be no delay. He declared, therefore, his wish to depart as soon as the heat of the day should decline.

"And now, my lord—" said Toussaint.

"Yes, now for the explanation of this fancy of not receiving kindness from your best friends. Let us hear."

"I have this morning, my lord, dispatched letters to Don Joachim Garcia at St. Domingo—"

"You are in communication with the colonial government, and not through me! What can this mean?"

"And here, my lord, are exact copies of my letters, which I request the favor of you to read, and, if I may be permitted to say so, without haste or prejudice—though, in this case, it is much to ask."

Toussaint disappeared in the inner apartment, but not before he saw a smile on Papalier's face; a smile which told of amusement at the idea of a negro sending dispatches of any importance to the head of the government of the Spanish colony.

The general did not seem to feel any of the same amusement. His countenance was perplexed and anxious. He certainly obeyed Toussaint's wishes as to not being in haste; for he read the papers (which were few and short) again and again. He had not laid them down when Toussaint re-appeared from within, no longer glittering in his uniform and polished arms, but dressed in his old plantation clothes, and with his woolen cap in his hand. Both his guests first gazed at him, and then started from their seats.

Toussaint merely passed through the tent, bowing low to the general, and bidding him farewell. A confused noise outside, followed by a shout, roused Hermona from his astonishment.

"He is addressing the troops!" he cried, drawing his sword and rushing forth.

Toussaint was not addressing the troops. He was merely informing Jacques, whom he had requested to be in waiting there, beside his horse, that he was no longer a commander, no longer in the forces; and that the recent proclamation, by showing him that the cause of negro freedom was now one with that of the present government of France, was the reason of his retirement from the Spanish territory. He explained himself thus far, in order that he might not be considered a traitor to the lost cause of royalty in France; but, rather, loyal to that of his color, from the first day of its becoming a cause.

Numbers became aware that something unusual was going forward, and were thronging to the spot when the general rushed forth, sword in hand, shouting aloud,

"The traitor! Seize the traitor! Soldiers! seize the traitor!"

Toussaint turned in an instant and sprang upon his horse. Not a negro would lay hands on him; but they cast upon him, in token of honor, the blossoms of the amaryllis and the orange that they carried. The Spanish soldiers, however, endeavored to close round him and hem him in, as the general's voice was still heard,

"Seize him! Bring him in, dead or alive!"

Toussaint, however, was a perfect horseman; and his favorite horse served him well in this crisis. It burst through or bounded over all opposition, and, amidst a shower of white blossoms which strewed the way, instantly carried him beyond the camp. Well-mounted soldiers, and many of them, were behind, however; and it was a hard race between the fugitive and his pursuers, as it was witnessed from the camp. Along the river-bank and over the bridge the danger of Toussaint appeared extreme; and the negroes, watching the countenance of Jacques, preserved a dead silence when all the horsemen had disappeared in the woods which clothed the steep. Then all eyes were turned toward the summit of that ridge, where the road crossed a space clear of trees; and there, in an incredibly short time, appeared the solitary horseman, who, unencumbered with heavy arms, and lightly clothed, had greatly the advantage of the soldiers in mounting the ascent. He was still followed; but he was just disappearing over the ridge when the foremost soldier issued from the wood behind him.

"He is safe! he is safe!" was murmured through the throng; and the words reached the ear of the general in a tone which convinced him that the attachment of the black troops to Toussaint Breda was as strong as he himself had that morning declared it to be.

"Now you see, general," said Papalier, turning into the tent, from which he too had come forth in the excitement of the scene, "you see what you have to expect from these negroes."

"I see what I have to expect from you," replied the general, with severity. "It is enough to witness how you speak of a man to

whom you owe your life this very day — and not for the first time.”

“Nay, general, I have called him no names — not even ‘traitor.’”

“I have not owed him my life, M. Papalier; and you are not the commander of these forces. It is my duty to prevent the defection of the negro troops; and I therefore used the language of the Government I serve in proclaiming him a traitor. Had it been in mere speculation between him and myself that those papers had come in question, God knows I should have called him something very different.”

“There is something in the man that infatuates — that blinds one’s judgment, certainly,” said Papalier. “His master, Bayou, spoiled him with letting him educate himself to an absurd extent. I always told Bayou so; and there is no saying now what the consequences may be. It is my opinion that we have not heard the last of him yet.”

“Probably,” said the general, gathering up his papers as his aid entered, and leaving the tent in conversation with him, almost without a farewell notice of Papalier.

The negro troops were busy, to a man, in learning from Jacques, and repeating to one another, the particulars of what was in the proclamation, and the reasons of Toussaint’s departure. General Hermona found that the two remaining black leaders, Jean François and Blasson, were not infected by Toussaint’s convictions; that, on the contrary, they were far from sorry that he was thus gone, leaving them to the full enjoyment of Spanish grace. They addressed their soldiers in favor of loyalty and in denunciation of treason, and treated the proclamation as slightly as Don Joachim Garcia could possibly have wished. They met with little response, however; and every one felt, amidst the show, and parade, and festivity of the day, a restlessness and uncertainty which he perceived existed no less in his neighbor than in himself. No one’s mind was in the business or enjoyment of the festival; and no one could be greatly surprised at any thing that might take place, though the men were sufficiently orderly in the discharge of their duty to render any interference with them unwarrantable, and any precautions against their defection impossible. The great hope lay in the influence of the two leaders who remained, as the great fear was of that of the one who was gone.

The Spanish force was small, constituting only about one-fourth of the whole; and of these the best mounted had not returned from the pursuit of Toussaint; not because they could follow him far in the enemy’s country, but because it required some skill and caution to get back in broad day, after having roused expectation all along the road.

While the leaders were anxiously calculating probabilities and reckoning forces, Jacques was satisfying himself that the preponderance of numbers was greatly on the side of his absent friend. His hatred of the whites, which had

never intermitted, was wrought up to strong passion this day by the treatment the proclamation and his friend had received. He exulted in the thought of being able to humble the Spaniards by withdrawing the force which enabled them to hold their posts, and by making him whom they called a traitor more powerful in the cause of the blacks than they could henceforth be in that of royalist France. Fired with these thoughts, he was hastily passing the tent of Toussaint, which he had supposed deserted, when he heard from within, speaking in anger and fear, a voice which he well knew, and which had power over him. He had strong reasons for remembering the first time he had seen Thérèse — on the night of the escape across the frontier. She was strongly associated with his feelings toward the class to which her owner belonged; and he knew that she, beautiful, lonely, and wretched, shared those feelings. If he had not known this from words dropped by her during the events of this morning, he would have learned it now; for she was declaring her thoughts to her master loudly enough for any one who passed by to overhear.

Jacques entered the tent; and there stood Thérèse, declaring that she would leave her master, and never see him more, but prevented from escaping by Papalier having intercepted her passage to the entrance. Her eyes glowed with delight on the appearance of Jacques, to whom she immediately addressed herself.

“I will not go with him — I will not go with him to Paris, to see his young ladies. He shall not take care of me. I will take care of myself. I will drown myself sooner than go with him. I do not care what becomes of me, but I will not go.”

“Yes, you will care what becomes of you, Thérèse, because your own people care,” said Jacques. “I will protect you. If you will be my wife, no white shall molest you again.”

“Be your wife!”

“Yes. I love the blacks; and none so much as those whom the whites have oppressed — no one so much as you. If you will be my wife, we will —”

Here, remembering the presence of a white, Jacques explained to Thérèse, in the negro language (which she understood, though she always spoke French), the new hopes which had arisen for the blacks, and his own intention of following Toussaint to make him a chief. He concluded in good French, smiling maliciously at Papalier as he spoke,

“You will come with me now to the priest, and be my wife?”

“I will,” replied Thérèse, calmly.

“Go,” said Papalier. “You have my leave. I am thus honorably released from the care of you till times shall change. I am glad that you will not remain unprotected, at least.”

“Unprotected!” exclaimed Thérèse, as she threw on the Spanish mantle which she was now accustomed to wear abroad. “Unprotected! And what has your protection been?”

"Very kind, my dear, I am sure. I have spent on your education money which I should be very glad of now. When people flatter you, Thérèse (as they will do, for there is not a negro in all the island to compare with you), remember who made you a lady. You will promise me that much, Thérèse, at parting?"

"Remember who made me a lady! I have forgotten too long who made me a woman," said Thérèse, devoutly upraising her eyes. "In serving him and loving my husband, I will strive to forget you."

"All alike!" muttered Papalier, as the pair went out. "This is what one may expect from negroes, as the general will learn when he has had enough to do with them. They are all alike."

This great event in the life of Jacques Desalines did not delay his proceedings for more than half an hour. Noon was but just past when he led forth his wife from the presence of the priest, mounted her on his own horse before his tent, and sent her forward under the escort of his personal servant, promising to overtake her almost as soon as she should have crossed the river. When she was gone, he sent the word through the negro soldiery, who gathered round him almost to a man, and with the quietness which became their superior force. Jean Français and Biasson were left with scarcely twenty followers each, and those few would do nothing. The whites felt themselves powerless amidst the noonday heats, and opposed to threefold numbers; and their officers found that nothing was to be done but to allow them to look on quietly, while Jacques led away his little army, with loud music and a streaming white flag. A few horsemen led the van and closed in the rear. The rest marched as if on a holiday trip, now singing to the music of the band, and now making the hills ring again with the name of Toussaint Breda.

As General Hermona, entirely indisposed for his siesta, watched the march through his glass from the entrance of his tent, while the notes of the wind instruments swelled and died away in the still air, one of his aids was overheard by him to say to another,

"The general has probably changed his opinion since he said to you this morning, of Toussaint Breda, that God could not visit a soul more pure. We have all had to change our minds rather more rapidly than suits such a warm climate."

"You may have changed your opinions since the sun rose, gentlemen," said Hermona, "but I am not sure that I have."

"How! Is it possible? We do not understand you, my lord."

"Do you suppose that you understand him? Have we been of a degraded race, slaves, and suddenly offered restoration to full manhood and citizenship? How otherwise can we understand this man? I do not profess to do so."

"You think well of him, my lord?"

"I am so disposed.. Time, however, will show. He has gone away magnanimously enough, alone, and believing, I am confident, from what Father Laxabon tells me, that his career is closed; but I rather think we shall hear more of him."

"How these people revel in music!" observed one of the staff. "How they are pouring it forth now!"

"And not without reason, surely," said Hermona. "It is their exodus that we are watching."

CHAPTER VIII.

BREDA AGAIN.

THE French proclamation was efficiently published along the line of march of the blacks. They shouted and sang the tidings of their freedom, joining with them the name of Toussaint Breda. These tidings of freedom rang through the ravines, and echoed up the sides of the hills, and through the depths of the forests, startling the wild birds on the mountain ponds, and the deer among the high ferns, and bringing down from their fastnesses a multitude of men who had fled thither from the vengeance of the whites and mulattoes, and to escape sharing in the violence of the negro force which Jean Français had left behind him, to pursue uncontrolled their course of plunder and butchery. Glad, to such, were the tidings of freedom, with order, and under the command of one whose name was never mentioned without respect, if not enthusiasm. The negro who did not know that there was any more world on the other side the Cibao peaks, had yet learned to be proud of the learning of Toussaint. The slave who conceived of God as dwelling in the innermost of the Mornes, and coming forth to govern his subjects with the fire of the lightning and the scythe of the hurricane, was yet able to revere the piety of Toussaint. The black bandit who had dipped his hands in the blood of his master, and feasted his ear with the groans of the innocent babes who had sat upon his knee, yet felt that there was something impressive in the simple habit of forgiveness, the vigilant spirit of mercy which distinguished Toussaint Breda from all his brethren in arms—from all the leading men of his color, except his friend Henri Christophe. At the name of Toussaint Breda, then, these flocked down into the road by hundreds, till they swelled the numbers of the march to thousands. The Spanish soldiers, returning to their camp by such by-ways as they could find, heard again and again from a distance the cries of welcome and of triumph; and one or two of them chanced to witness from a high point of rock, or through a thick screen of foliage, the joyous progress of the little army, hastening on to find their chief. These involuntary spies gathered at every point of observation news

which would gall the very soul of Jean François if they should get back to the camp to tell it.

Jacques knew where to seek his friend, and led the way, on descending from the hills, straight across the plain to the Breda estate, where Toussaint meant to await his family. How unlike was this plantation to what it was when these negroes had seen it last! The cane-fields, heretofore so trim and orderly, with the tall canes springing from the clean black soil, were now a jungle. The old plants had run up till they had leaned over with their own weight, and fallen upon one another. Their sneekers had sprung up in myriads, so that the raccoon which burrowed among them could scarcely make its way in and out. The grass on the little inclosed lawns grew so rank that the cattle, now wild, were almost hidden as they lay down in it; and so uneven and unsightly were the patches of growth, that the blossoming shrubs with which it had been sprinkled for ornament now looked forlorn and out of place, flowering amidst the desolation. The slave-quarter was scarcely distinguishable from the wood behind it, so nearly was it overgrown with weeds. A young foal was browsing on the thatch, and a crowd of glittering lizards darted out and away on the approach of human feet.

Jacques did not stay at the slave-quarter; but he desired his company to remain there and in the neighboring field, while he went with Thérèse to bring out their chief to them. They went up to the house, but in no one of its deserted chambers did they find Toussaint.

"Perhaps he is in his own cottage," said Thérèse.

"Is it possible," replied Jacques, "that, with this fine house all to himself, he should take up with that old hut?"

"Let us see," said Thérèse, "for he is certainly not here."

When they reached Toussaint's cottage, it was no easy matter to know how to effect an entrance. Enormous gourds had spread their net-work over the ground, like traps for the feet of trespassers. The front of the piazza was completely overgrown with the creepers which had been brought there only to cover the posts, and hang their blossoms from the eaves. They had now spread and tangled themselves, till they made the house look like a thicket. In one place, however, between two of the posts, they had been torn down, and the evening wind was tossing the loose coils about. Jacques entered the gap, and immediately looked out again, smiling, and beckoning Thérèse to come and see. There, in the piazza, they found Toussaint, stretched asleep upon the bench—so soundly asleep, for once, that the whispers of his friends did not alter for a moment his heavy breathing.

"How tired he must be!" said Jacques. "At other times I have known his sleep so light, that he was broad awake, as quick as a lizard, if a beetle did but sail over his head."

"He may well be tired," said Thérèse. "You know how weary he looked at mass this morning. I believe he had no rest last night; and now this march to-day—"

"Well! he must rouse up now, however, for his business will not wait." And he called him by his name.

"Henri!" cried Toussaint, starting up.

"No, not Henri. I am Jacques. You are not awake yet, and the place is dark. I am your friend Jacques, five inches shorter than Henri. You see?"

"You here, Jacques! and Thérèse! Surely I am not awake yet."

"Yes you are, now you know Thérèse, whom you will henceforth look upon as my wife. We are both free of the whites now, forever."

"Is it possible?"

"It is true; and we will tell you all presently. But first explain why you called me Henri as you woke. If we could see Henri—Why did you name Henri?"

"Because he was the next person I expected to see. I met one on the way who knew where he was, and took a message to him."

"If we could learn from Henri—" said Jacques.

"Here is Henri," said the calm, kindly, well-known voice of the powerful Christophe, who now showed himself outside. The other went out to him, and greeted him heartily.

"What news, Henri?" asked Toussaint. "How are affairs at Cap? What is doing about the proclamation there?"

"Affairs are going badly at Cap. The mulattoes will no more bear our proclamation than the whites would bear theirs. They have shut up General Laveaux in prison; and the French, without their military leader, do not know what to do next. The commissary has no authority, and talks of embarking for France; and the troops are cursing the negroes, for whose sake, they say, their general is imprisoned, and will soon die of the heats."

"We must deliver General Laveaux," said Toussaint. "Our work already lies straight before us. We must raise a force. Henri, can you bring soldiers?"

"Ay, Henri," said Jacques, "what force can you bring to join ours? General Toussaint Breda has six thousand here at hand, half of whom are disciplined soldiers, well armed. The rest are partially armed, and have strong hearts and ready hands."

Toussaint turned round, as if to know what Jacques could mean.

"General," said Jacques, "the army I speak of is there, among those fields, burning to greet you, their commander; but, in the mean time, I believe, supping heartily on whatever they can find in your wilderness here, in the shape of maize, pumpkins, and plantains—and what else you know better than I. That is right, Thérèse: rest yourself in the piazza, and I will bring you some supper too."

"Six thousand did you say, Jacques?" said

Henri. "I can rally two thousand this night; and more will join on the way."

"We must free Laveaux before sunrise," said Toussaint. "Will our troops be fit for a march after this supper of theirs, Jacques—after supper and three hours' rest?"

"They are fit at this moment to march over the island—to swim from St. Domingo to France, if you will only lead them," replied Jacques. "Go to them, and they will do what you will."

"So be it!" said Toussaint, his bosom for a moment heaving with the thought that his career, even as viewed by Father Laxabon, was not ended. "Henri, what is the state of the plain? Is the road open?"

"Far from it. The mulattoes are suspicious, and on the watch against some danger—I believe they are not clear what. I avoided some of their scouts; and the long way they made me go round was the reason of my being late."

Observing that Toussaint looked thoughtful, he proceeded: "I imagine there is no force in the plain that could resist your numbers, if you are sure of your troops. The road is open, if they choose that it be so."

"I am sure of only half of them; and then there is the town— It seems to me, Jacques, that I may more depend upon my troops in their present mood, for a merry night-march, though it be a long one, than for a skirmish through the plain, though it be a short one."

Jacques assented. It was agreed that the little army should proceed by the mountain tracts, round by Plaisance and Gros Morne, so as to arrive by the Haut-du-Cap, in which direction it was not likely that a foe should be looked for. Thus they could pour into the town from the western heights before sunrise, while the scouts of the mulatto rebels were looking for them across the eastern plain.

This settled, Jacques went down among his forces, to tell them that their general was engaged in a council of war—Henri Christophe having joined from Cap, with a promise of troops, and with intelligence which would open the way to victory and freedom. The general allowed them ten minutes more for refreshment, and to form themselves into order; and he would then present himself to them. Shouting was forbidden, lest any foe should be within hearing; but a murmur of delight and mutual congratulation ran through the ranks, which were beginning to form while the leader of their march was yet speaking. He retreated, carrying with him the best arms he could select for the use of his general.

While he was gone, Toussaint stepped back into the piazza, where Thérèse sat quietly watching the birds fitting in and out among the foliage and flowers.

"Thérèse," said he, "what will you do this night and to-morrow? Who will take care of you?"

"I know not, I care not," said she. "There

are no whites here; and I am well where they are not. Will you not let me stay here?"

"Did Jacques say, and say truly, that you are his wife?"

"He said so, and truly. I have been wretched, for long—"

"And sinful. Wretchedness and sin go together."

"And I was sinful, but no one told me so. I was ignorant, and weak, and a slave. Now I am a woman, and a wife. No more whites, no more sin, no more misery! Will you not let me stay here?"

"I will; and here you will presently be safe, and well cared for, I hope. My wife and my children are coming home; coming, probably, in a few hours. They will make this a home to you till Jacques can give you one of your own. You shall be guarded here till my Margot arrives. Shall it be so?"

"Shall it? Oh, thank God! Jacques," she cried, as she heard her husband's step approaching, "oh, Jacques! I am happy. Toussaint Breda is kind; he has forgiven me; he welcomes me; his wife will—"

Tears drowned her voice. Toussaint said, gently,

"It is not for me to forgive, Thérèse, whom you have never offended. God has forgiven, I trust, your young years of sin. You will atone (will you not?) by the purity of your life; by watching over others, lest they suffer as you have done. You will guard the minds of my young daughters, will you not? You will thank God through my Génifrède, my Aimée?"

"I will, I will," she eagerly cried, lifting up her face, bright through her tears. "Indeed my heart will be pure—longs to be pure."

"I know it, Thérèse," said Toussaint. "I have always believed it, and I now know it."

He turned to Jacques and said,

"You declare yourself to be under my command?"

"Yes, Toussaint; you are my general."

"Well, then, I appoint to you the duty of remaining here, with a troop, to guard my family (who are coming in a few hours) and this estate. I have some hopes of doing what I want at Cap without striking a blow, and you will be better here. You hate the whites too much to like my warfare. Farewell, Thérèse! Jacques, follow me to receive your troop."

CHAPTER IX.

THE MAN.

THE town of Cap Français was next morning in a hurry, which attracted the attention of General Laveaux in his prison, and the French commissary, Polverel, on board the vessel in the roads, in which he had taken refuge from the mulattoes, and where he held himself in readiness to set sail for France in case of any grave disaster befalling the general or the

troops. From his cell Laveaux heard in the street the tramp of horses and of human feet; and from the deck of the *Orphée*, Polverel watched through his glass the bustle on the wharves, and the putting off of more than one boat, which prepared him to receive news.

The news came. The report was universal in the town that Toussaint Breda had gone over from the allies to the side of republican France, and that this step had been followed by a large defection from the allied forces. Messengers had arrived, one after another, with dispatches, which had been intercepted by the mulattoes. Those who brought them, however, had given out that some posts had been surrendered, without a summons, into the hands of the French. This was certainly the case with Marmalade and Plaisance, and others were confidently spoken of.

"Offered to our hands just when our hands are tied and we can not take them!" said Polverel. "If our fresh regiments would only arrive to-day, and help us to wrench the prison keys from the hands of those devils of mulattoes, and let out Laveaux, the colony would be ours before night."

As he spoke, he swept the horizon to the north and east with his glass, but no welcome sail was visible.

"Now look the other way," said the commander of the vessel. "If there is no help at sea, try if there be none on land. I have been watching that mountain side for some time, and if I am not much mistaken, there is an army of dusky fellows there."

"Dusky! mulattoes! then we are lost!" cried Polverel. "If the mulattoes from the south have come up in any numbers—"

"They are black as the night that has just gone," said the commander, still keeping his eye fixed on the western heights above the town. See, the sun strikes them now. They are blacks. The negroes under Toussaint himself, very probably. I shall not have the pleasure of carrying you to France just yet, M. Polverel."

Notwithstanding the display of black forces on the Haut-du-Cap, the bustle of the town seemed to be in the opposite direction. A few shots were fired in the south-east quarter, and some smoke arose from thence. This was soon explained by the news that Henri Christophe had approached the town from the plain with four or five thousand men, and was forcing an entrance that way. There was little conflict. Toussaint poured down his force through the barracks, where the French soldiers gave him a hearty welcome, and along the avenues of the Government-house, and the neighboring public offices, in which quarter the mulattoes had little interest. Within an hour the mulattoes had all slunk back into their homes, telling their families that they could have dealt with the French alone, but that they could not withstand an army of twenty thousand men (only doubling the real number), which had

dropped from the clouds, for aught they knew. The few dead bodies were removed, the sand sucked up their blood, and the morning wind blew dust over its traces. A boat was sent off, in due form, to bring Commissary Polverel home to the Government-house. Toussaint himself went to the prison, to bring out General Laveaux with every demonstration of respect; and all presently wore the aspect of a jour-de-fête.

Hour by hour, tidings were spread which increased the joy of the French and the humiliation of their foes. The intercepted dispatches were given up, and more arrived with the news of the successive defection from the allies of all the important posts in the colony held by negro forces. In the name of Toussaint Breda, the garrisons of Marmalade and Plaisance first declared for Republican France; and after them, Gros Morne, Henneri, and Le Dondon.

The news of the acquisition of these last arrived in the evening, when the French officials were entertaining the negro chief in the salon of the Government-house. It was late: the house was brilliantly lighted; and its illuminations were reflected from a multitude of faces without. Late as it was, and great as had been the fatigues of the negro troops, they were not yet weary of hearing the praises of their own Toussaint. Adding their numbers to those of the white inhabitants of Cap, they thronged the court of the Government-house and the Jesuits' Walk; and even in the Place d'Archer and the Rue Espagnole, passengers found it difficult to make their way. The assemblage could scarcely have told what detained them there, unless it were the vague expectation of more news, the repetition of the praises they loved to hear, and, perhaps, some hope of getting one more glimpse of Toussaint on this night of his triumph. From mouth to mouth circulated the words which General Laveaux had spoken in the morning, when released from his prison: "This man is the savior of the whites—the avenger of the authorities. He is surely the black, the Spartacus predicted by Raynal, whose destiny it should be to avenge the wrongs of his race." From mouth to mouth went these words; and from heart to heart spread the glow they kindled.

Toussaint himself had heard these words, and in his heart also were they glowing. As he sat at table, refreshing himself with fruits, but (according to his invariable custom) refusing wine, he was reminded by all that passed that his career was not ended. He wore the uniform of brigadier-general—a token that he had not lost rank. M. Polverel had declared his intention of soon returning to France; and General Laveaux had said, that when he was thus left in charge of the colony, he should entreat General Toussaint, who best understood its affairs, to fill up the office of lieutenant-governor, and should also be guided in military affairs implicitly by his counsels. Toussaint heard, and felt that, in truth, his career was

not ended. He was requested to name a day when he would take the oaths publicly, and receive the homage of the grateful colony; and, in his reply, he took occasion to declare, with earnestness, that his present course of action originated altogether in the decree of the Convention in favor of the negroes; and that the resources of his power and influence should all be directed toward raising his race to that intellectual and moral equality with the whites, without which they could neither enjoy nor retain the political equality which the Convention had decreed. In the midst of the strongly-expressed sympathy of his hosts, who were this day disposed to approve and admire all he said and did; while they were uttering hopes for his own people which touched his soul, the final news of this great day was brought in, contained in dispatches which told of the acquisition of the posts of Limbé and l'Alcu—the two bars to the north-western peninsula of the colony. The commanders declared their adhesion to the cause of the blacks and Toussaint Breda.

"Bravo!" cried the French general: "that obstinate region is ours! We will march through those posts to hold our festival, and the oaths shall be taken at Port Paix. Was not that district considered the most obstinate, general?"

Toussaint did not answer. He did not hear. The mention of Port Paix carried back his thoughts to the night when he was last there, heavy at heart, assisting his master to escape.

"All is ours now, through him," said M. Polverel, gazing at his guest.

"Yes," rejoined Laveaux, "he is the Napoleon Bonaparte of St. Domingo."

"Who is he? who is Napoleon Bonaparte?" asked Toussaint, roused to listen. "I have heard his name. What has he done?"

"He is a young French artillery officer—"

"A Corsican by birth," interposed Polverel.

"Is he really? I was not aware of that," said Laveaux. "That circumstance somewhat increases the resemblance of the cases. He

was ill-used (or thought he was) by his officers, and was on the point of joining the Turkish service, when he was employed in the defense of the Convention the other day. He saved the Convention—he saved Paris—and he is about to put off his uniform of brigadier-general" (and Laveaux smiled and bowed as he spoke) "like yourself; he is about to put off his uniform of brigadier-general for that of a higher rank. His name was known before, in connection with the siege of Toulon. But this last achievement is the grand one. He has cleared the path of the Convention—Polverel, did I not say rightly, that General Toussaint is the Napoleon Bonaparte of St. Domingo?"

"Yes. General Toussaint also is making for us an opening everywhere."

Toussaint heard the words, but they made a faint impression at the moment of his imagination being fixed on the young artillery officer.

There were those present, however, who lost nothing of what was spoken, and who conveyed it all to the eager ears outside. The black attendants, the gazers and listeners who went in and out, intoxicated with the glory of the negro general, reported all that was said of him. These last few words of Polverel wrought wonderfully, and were instantly spread through the excited multitude. A shout was presently heard, which must have sounded far up the mountains and over the bay; and Polverel started with surprise when his word came back to him in a response like that of an assembled nation. "L'Ouverture!" "L'Ouverture!" cried the multitude, fully comprehending what the word conveyed in its application to their chief, "Toussaint L'Ouverture!" Henceforth the city, the colony, the island, and, after a time, all Europe, rang with the name of Toussaint L'Ouverture.

When Toussaint heard the cry from without, he started to his feet; and his hosts rose also, on seeing the fire in his eye—brighter than during the deeds of the morning.

"The general would address them," said Polverel. "You wish to speak to the people, General Toussaint."

"No," said Toussaint.

"What then?" inquired Laveaux.

"I would be alone," said Toussaint, stepping backward from the table.

"Your fatigues have doubtless been great," observed Laveaux. "Lights shall be ordered in your apartment."

"I can not sleep yet," said Toussaint. "I can not sleep till I have news from Breda. But I have need of thought, gentlemen; there is moonlight and quiet in these gardens. Permit me to leave you now."

He paced the shrubberies, cool with moonlight and with dews; and his agitation subsided when all eyes but those of Heaven were withdrawn. Here no flatteries met his ear, no gestures of admiration made him drop his eyes abashed. Constrained as he yet felt himself in equal intercourse with whites, new to his recognized freedom, unassured in his acts, uncertain of the future, and (as he believed) unprepared for such a future as was now unfolding, there was something inexpressibly irksome and humbling in the homage of the whites—of men who understood nothing of him and little of his race, and who could have none but political purposes in their intercourses with him. He needed this evening the sincerities as well as the soothing of Nature; and it was with a sense of relief that he cast himself once again on her bosom, to be instructed, with infantine belief, how small an atom he was in the universe of God, how low a rank he held in the hierarchy of the ministers of the Highest.

"Yet I *am* one," thought he, as the sound of his name and new title reached his ear, distinct, though softened by distance. "I am an appointed minister. It seems as if I were the one of whom I myself have spoken as likely to

arise, not, as Laveaux says after Raynal, to avenge, but to repair the wrongs of my color. Low indeed are we sunk, deep is our ignorance, abject are our wills, if such an one as I am to be the leader of thousands. I, whose will is yet unexercised—I, who shrink ashamed before the knowledge of the meanest white—I, so lately a slave—so long dependent that I am an oppression to myself—am at this hour the ruler over ten thousand wills! The ways of God are dark, or it might seem that he despised his negro children in committing so many of them to so poor a guide. But he despises nothing that he has made. It may be that we are too weak and ignorant to be fit for better guidance in our new state of rights and duties. It may be that a series of teachers is appointed to my color, of whom I am to be the first, only because I am the lowest; destined to give way to wiser guides when I have taught all that I know, and done all that I can. May it be so! I will devote myself wholly; and, when I have done, may I be more willing to hide myself in my cottage, or lie down in my grave, than I have been this day to accept the new lot which I dare not refuse! Deal gently with me, O God! and, however I fail, let me not see my children's hearts hardened, as hearts are hardened by power! Let me not see in their faces the look of authority, nor hear in their voices the tones of pride! Be with my people, O Christ! The weaker I am, the more be thou with them, that thy Gospel may be at last received! The hearts of my people are soft; they are gentle, they are weak; let thy Gospel make them pure, let it make them free. Thy Gospel, who has not heard of it, and who has seen it? May it be found in the hearts of my people, the despised! and who shall then despise them again? The past is all guilt and groans. Into the future open a better way—"

"Toussaint L'Ouverture!" he heard again from afar, and bowed his head, overpowered with hope.

"Toussaint L'Ouverture!" repeated some light, gay voices close at hand. His boys were come, choosing to bring themselves the news from Breda, that Margot and her daughters, and old Dessalines and Moysse, were all there, safe and happy, except for their dismay at finding the cottage and field in such a state of desolation.

"They will not mind when they hear that they are to live in a mansion henceforward," said Placide. "Jean Français had better have stood by his color, as we do."

"And how have you stood by your color, my young hero?"

"I told Jean in the camp to-day—"

"Jean! In the camp! How came you there?"

"We were so near that I galloped in to see what they thought of your leaving, and who had followed you."

"Then I thank God that you are here."

"Jean caught me; but the general bade him

let me go, and asked whether the blacks made war upon children. I told him that I was not a child; and I told Jean that you had rather live in a cave for the sake of the blacks, than go off to the court of Spain—"

"What made you fancy I should go there?"

"Not you, but Jean. Jean is going, he says, because he is a noble. There will soon be peace between France and Spain, he says, and then he shall be a noble at the court of Spain. I am glad he is going."

"So am I, if he thinks he shall be happy there."

"We shall be better without him," said Isaac. He would never be quiet while you were made lieutenant-governor of St. Domingo. Now you will be alone and unmolested in your power."

"Where did you learn all this?"

"Every one knows it—every one in Cap. Every one knows that Jean has done with us, and that the commissary is going home, and the general, Laveaux, means to be guided in every thing by you—and that the posts have all surrendered in your name—and that at Port Paix—"

"Enough, enough! my boys. Too much, for I see that your hearts are proud."

"The commissary and the general said that you are supreme—the idol of your color. Those were their words."

"And in this there is yet no glory. I have yet done nothing but by what is called accident. Our own people were ready by no preparation of mine; the mulattoes were weak and taken by surprise, through circumstances not of my ordering. Glory there may hereafter be belonging to our name, my boys, but as yet there is none. I have power, but power is less often glory than disgrace."

"Oh, father! do but listen. Hark again! 'Toussaint L'Ouverture!'"

"I will strive to make that shont a prophecy, my sons. Till then, no pride! Are you not weary? Come in to rest. Can you sleep in my fine chamber here as well as at Breda?"

"Anywhere," said Isaac, sleepily.

Toussaint gave up his apartment to his sons, and went forth once more to survey the town, and see that his troops were in their quarters. This done, he repaired to his friend Henri, willing for one more night to forego his greatness; and there, in his friend's small barrack-room, the supreme in the colony, the idol of his color, slept, as he had hoped for his boys, as tranquil as if he had been at Breda.

CHAPTER X.

A MORNING OF OFFICE.

If the devastation attending the revolutionary wars of St. Domingo was great, it was repaired with singular rapidity. Thanks to the vigorous agencies of nature in a tropical region,

the desolated plains were presently covered with fresh harvests, and the burned woods were buried deep under the shadow of young forests, more beautiful than the old. Thanks also to the government of the wisest mind in the island, the moral evils of the struggle were made subordinate to its good results. It was not in the power of man to bury past injuries in oblivion, while there were continually present minds which had been debased by tyranny, and hearts which had been outraged by cruelty; but all that could be done was done. Vigorous employment was made the great law of society, the one condition of the favor of its chief; and, amidst the labors of the hoe and the mill, the workshop and the wharf; amidst the toils of the march and the bustle of the court, the bereaved and insulted forgot their woes and their revenge. A new growth of veneration and of hope overspread the ruins of old delights and attachments, as the verdure of the plain spread its mantle over the wrecks of mansion and of hut. In seven years from the kindling of the first incendiary torch on the Plain du Nord, it would have been hard for a stranger landing in St. Domingo to believe what had been the horrors of the war.

Of these seven years, however, the first three or four had been entirely spent in war, and the rest disturbed by it. Double that number of years must pass before there could be any security that the crop planted would ever be reaped, or that the peasants who laid out their family burying-grounds would be carried there in full age, instead of perishing in the field or in the woods. The cultivators went out to their daily work with the gun slung across their shoulders and the cutlass in their belt; the hills were crested with forts, and the mountain passes were watched by scouts. The troops were frequently reviewed in the squares of the towns, and news was perpetually arriving of a skirmish here or there. The mulatto general, Rigand, had never acknowledged the authority of Toussaint L'Ouverture; and he was still in the field, with a mulatto force sufficient to interrupt the prosperity of the colony, and endanger the authority of its lieutenant-governor. It was some time, however, since Rigand had approached any of the large towns. The sufferers by his incursions were the planters and field-laborers. The inhabitants of the towns carried on their daily affairs as if peace had been fully established in the island, and feeling the effects of such warfare as there was only in their occasional contributions of time and money.

The commander-in-chief, as Toussaint L'Ouverture was called, by the appointment of the French commissaries, though his dignity had not yet been confirmed from Paris—the commander-in-chief of St. Domingo held his headquarters at Port au Prince. Among other considerations which rendered this convenient, the chief was that he thus avoided much collision with the French officials, which must otherwise have taken place. All the commissaries, who

rapidly succeeded one another from Paris, resided at the Government-house, in Cap Francais. Thence they issued orders and regulations in the name of the Government at home; orders and regulations which were sometimes practicable, sometimes unwise, and often absurd. If Toussaint had resided at Cap, a constant witness of their ignorance of the minds, manners, and interests of the blacks—if he had been there to listen to the complaints and appeals which would have been daily made, he could scarcely have kept terms for a single week with the French authorities. By establishing himself in the south, while they remained in the north, he was able quietly to neutralize or repair much of the mischief which they did, and to execute many of his own plans without consulting them; while many a grievance was silently borne, many an order simply neglected, which would have been a cause of quarrel if any power of redress had been at hand. Jealous as he was for the infant freedom of his race, Toussaint knew that it would be best preserved by weaning their minds from thoughts of anger and their eyes from the sight of blood. Trust in the better part of negro nature guided him in his choice between two evils. He preferred that they should be misgoverned in some affairs of secondary importance, and keep the peace, rather than that they should be governed to their hearts' content by himself, at the risk of quarrel with the mother-country. He trusted to the singular power of forbearance and forgiveness which is found in the negro race for the preservation of friendship with the whites, and of the blessings of peace; and he therefore reserved his own powerful influence over both parties for great occasions, interfering only when he perceived that, through carelessness or ignorance, the French authorities were endangering some essential liberty of those to whom they were the medium of the pleasure of the Government at home. The blacks were aware that the vigilance of their commander-in-chief over their civil rights never slept, and that his interference always availed; and these convictions insured their submission, or, at least, their not going beyond passive resistance on ordinary occasions, and thus strengthened their habits of peace.

The commander-in-chief held his levées at Port au Prince on certain days of the month all the year round. No matter how far off he might be, or how engaged the night before, he rarely failed to be at home on the appointed day, at the fixed hour. On one particular occasion he was known to have been out against Rigand, day and night, for a fortnight, and to be closely engaged as far south as Aux Cayes the very evening preceding the review and levée which had been announced for the twentieth of January. Not the less for this did he appear in front of the troops in the Place Républicaine when the daylight gushed in from the east, putting out the stars, whose reflection trembled in the still waters of the bay. The

last evolutions were finished, and the smoke from the last volley had melted away in the serene sky of January, before the coolness of the northern breeze had yielded to the blaze of the mounting sun. The troops then lined the long streets of the town and the avenue to the palace, while the commander-in-chief and his staff passed on and entered the palace gates.

The palace, like every other building in Port au Prince, consisted of one story only. The town had been destroyed by an earthquake in 1770; and, though earthquakes are extremely rare in St. Domingo, the place had been rebuilt in view of the danger of another. The palace therefore covered a large space of ground, and its principal rooms were each nearly surrounded by garden and grass-plot. The largest apartment, in which the levées were always held, was the best room in the island; if not for the richness of its furniture, for its space and proportions, and the views which it commanded. Not even the abode of the commander-in-chief could exhibit such silken sofas, marble tables, gilded balustrades, and japanned or ivory screens, as had been common in the mansions of the planters; and Toussaint had found other uses for such money as he had than those of pure luxury. The essential and natural advantages of his palace were enough for him and his. The floor of this, his favorite apartment, was covered with a fine India matting; the windows were hung with white muslin curtains; and the sofas, which stood round three sides of the room, between the numerous windows, were covered with green damask of no very rich quality. In these many windows lay the charm, commanding, as they did, extensive prospects to the east, north, and west. The broad verandah cast a shadow which rendered it unnecessary to keep the jalousies closed except during the hottest hours of the year. This morning every blind was swung wide open, and the room was cool and shady, while without all was bathed in the mild, golden sunshine of January—bright enough for the strongest eye, but without glare.

To the east and north spread the cul-de-sac, a plain of unequalled richness, extending to the foot of the mountains, fifteen miles into the interior. The sun had not yet risen so high but that these mountains cast a deep shadow for some distance into the plain, while their skirts were dark with coffee-groves, and their summits were strongly marked against the glowing sky. Amidst the wide, verdant level of the plain arose many a white mansion, each marked by a cluster of trees close at hand. Some of these plantation-houses looked bluish and cool in the mountain shadows; others were like bright specks in the sunshine, each surmounted by a star, if its gilded weather-cock chanced to turn in the breeze. To the north, also, this plain, still backed by mountains, extended till it joined the sands of the night.

Upon these sands, on the margin of the deep blue waters, might be seen flashing in the sun

a troop of flamingoes, now moving forward in a line into the waves, and diligently fishing; and then, on the alarm of a scout, all taking wing successively, and keeping their order, as they flew homeward to the salt-marshes in the interior; their scarlet bodies vividly contrasted with the dark green of the forests that clothed the mountain sides. To the west lay the broad azure sheet of the bay, locked by the island of Gonave, and sprinkled with fishing-boats, while under the forest-tufted rocks of the island two vessels rode at anchor—a schooner belonging to St. Domingo, and an English frigate.

In the shady western piazza sat a party who seemed much occupied in looking out upon the bay, and watching the vessels that lay under the island; from which vessels boats might be seen putting off for the town just at the time of the commencement of the levée. The party in the piazza consisted chiefly of women. Madame L'Ouverture was there—like, and yet unlike, the Margot of former years—employed, as usual—busy with her needle, and motherly, complacent, tenderly vigilant as of old; but with a matronly grace and dignity, which evidently arose from a gratified mind, and not from external state. Her daughters were beside her, both wonderfully improved in beauty, though Génifrède still preserved the superiority there. She sat a little apart from her mother and sister, netting. Moysé was at her feet, in order to obtain an occasional gleam from the eyes which were cast down upon her work. His idolatry of her was no surprise to any who looked upon her in her beauty, now animated and exalted by the love which she had avowed, and which was sanctioned by her father and her family. The sisters were dressed nearly alike, though Aimée knew well that it would have been politic to have avoided thus bringing herself into immediate comparison with her sister. But Aimée cared not what was thought of her face, form, or dress. Isaac had always been satisfied with them. She had confided in Génifrède's taste when they first assumed their rank, and it was least troublesome to do so still. If Isaac should wish it otherwise when he should return from France, she would do as he desired. Meantime, they were dressed in all essentials exactly alike, from the pattern of the Madras handkerchief they wore (according to universal custom) on their heads, to the cut of the French-kid shoe. The dress was far from resembling the European fashion of the time. No tight lacing; no casing in whalebone; nothing like a hoop. A chemisette of the finest cambric appeared within the bodice, and covered the bosom. The short, full sleeves were also of white cambric. The bodice, and short, full skirt, were of deep yellow India silk; and the waist was confined with a broad band of violet-colored velvet, gayly embroidered. The only difference in the dress of the sisters was in their ornaments. Aimée wore heavy ear-drops, and a large necklace and bracelets of amethyst; while Génifrède wore, suspended from a throat-

band of velvet, embroidered like that which bound her waist, a massive plain gold crucifix, lately given her by Moyses. Her ear-rings were hoops of plain gold, and her bracelets again of embroidered velvet, clasped with plain gold. In her might be seen, and in her was seen by the Europeans who attended the levée of that day, what the negro face and form may be when seen in their native climate, unhardened by degradation, undebased by ignorance, unspoiled by oppression; all peculiarities of feature softened under the refining influence of mind, and all peculiarities of expression called out in their beauty by the free exercise of natural affections. The animated sweetness of the negro countenance is known only to those who have seen it thus.

Paul was of the party, looking very well in the French uniform, which he wore in honor of his brother on great occasions, though he was far from having grown warlike on his change of fortune. His heart was still in his cottage or on the sea; and now, as he stood leaning against a pillar of the piazza, his eye was more busy in watching the fishing-boats in the bay than observing what went on within the house. The only thing he liked about state-days was the hours of idleness they afforded; such hours as this, when, lounging in the shade, he could see Moyses happy at the feet of his beloved, and enjoy the soft wind as it breathed past, laden with spicy scents. During such an hour, he almost forgot the restraints of his uniform and of his rank.

There was yet another person in the piazza. Seated on its step, but sheltered by its broad eaves, sat Thérèse—more beautiful by far than Génifréde—more beautiful by far than in her days of girlhood, celebrated as she had then been throughout the colony. Her girlishness was gone, except its grace; her sensitiveness was gone, and (as those might think who did not watch the changes of her eye) much of her animation. Her carriage was majestic, her countenance calm, and its beauty, now refined by a life of leisure and the consciousness of rank—leisure and rank both well employed—more imposing than ever. Her husband was now a general in Toussaint's army. When he was in the field, Madame Dessalines remained at home, on their estate near St. Marc. When he was in attendance on the commander-in-chief, she was ever a welcome guest in Toussaint's family. Madame L'Ouverture loved her as a daughter; and she had endeared herself to the girls. At this time, from an accidental circumstance, she was at the palace without her husband. It was evident that she felt quite at home there; for, though she had arrived only a few hours before, she did not feel disposed to converse. As she sat alone, leaning against the base of the pillar, she now and then cast her eyes on the book she held open in her hand, but for the most part looked abroad upon the terraced town, the bay, or the shadowy clefts of the rocky island which closed it in.

The sound of feet and of voices from within increased from moment to moment. The commander-in-chief had assumed his place, with his aids on either hand; and presently the room was so nearly filled as to leave no more space than was required for the deputations to pass in at one entrance on the south of the apartment, appear before the general, and pass out at the other door. Toussaint stood at the centre of the north end, beside a table partly covered with papers, and at which sat his secretary. On this table lay his cocked hat. His uniform was blue, with scarlet cape and cuffs, richly embroidered. He had white trowsers, long Hessian boots, and, as usual, the Madras handkerchief on his head. While walking up the apartment, he had been conversing on business with his officers, and continued to do so, without the loss of a moment, till, on taking his place, two ushers came up with an account of the parties waiting for admittance, desiring to know his pleasure as to who should have precedence.

"The clergy," said Toussaint. "The first in duty must be first in honor."

In a few moments there was a loud announcement of the clergy from the districts of St. Marc, Léogane, Mirbalais, and so on, through a long enumeration of districts. The priests entered, two and two, a long procession of black gowns. As they collected into a group before him, every one anxiously making way for them, Toussaint crossed his arms upon his breast, and bowed his head low for many moments. When he looked up again, an expression of true reverence was upon his countenance; and, in a tone of earnestness, he asked for what service they desired to command him.

Father Antioche, an old priest, assisted by a brother at least thirty years younger, offered sealed papers, which he said contained reports from the several districts concerning the religious and moral condition of the inhabitants. Toussaint received them, and laid them, with his own hand, upon the table beside him, saying, with much solicitude,

"Do I see rightly in your countenances that you bring good news of your flocks, my fathers?"

"It is so," replied the old priest. "Our wishes are fast fulfilling."

"Eight thousand marriages have been celebrated, as will appear in our reports," added the young priest.

"And in the difficult cases of a plurality of wives," resumed Father Antioche, "there is generally a willingness in the cultivators to maintain liberally those who are put away."

"And the children?"

"The children may be found in the schools, sitting side by side in peace. The quarrels of the children of different mothers (quarrels often fatal in the fields) disappear in the schools. The reports will exhibit the history of our expanding system."

"God be thanked!" Toussaint uttered, in a low voice.

"Under the religious rule of your excellency," said the young priest, "enforced by so pure an example of piety, the morals of this colony will be established, and the salvation of its people secured."

"You," said Toussaint, "the servants of Christ, are the true rulers of this island and its inhabitants. I am your servant in guarding external order, during a period which you will employ in establishing your flocks in the everlasting wisdom and peace of religion. I hold the inferior office of keeping our enemies in awe, and enabling our people to find subsistence and comfort. My charge is the soil on which, and the bodies in which, men live. You have in charge their souls, in which lies the future of this world and of the next. You are the true rulers of St. Domingo, and we bow to you as such."

Every head was immediately bowed, and the priests went out, amidst the obeisances of the whole assemblage; some of the order wondering, perhaps, whether every mind there was as sincere in its homage as that of the commander-in-chief.

The superintendents of the cultivators came next—negroes dressed in check shirts, white linen jackets and trowsers, and with the usual Madras handkerchief on the head. They, too, handed in reports; and to them also did Toussaint address his questions, with an air of respect almost equal to that with which he had spoken to the priests.

"I grieve," said he, "that you can not yet fulfill your function altogether in peace. My generals and I have done what we can to preserve our fields from devastation, and our cultivators from the dangers and the fears of ambushed foes: but Rigaud's forces are not yet subdued; and, for a while, we must impose upon our cultivators the toil of working armed in the field. We are soldiers here," he added, looking round upon his officers, "but I hope there is not one of us who does not honor the hoe more than the gun. How far have you been able to repair, in the south-eastern districts, the interruption in the September planting?"

The superintendent of those districts came forward, and said that some planting had been effected in November, the sprouts of which now looked well. More planting had been done during the early part of the present month, and time would show the result.

"Good!" said Toussaint. "Some of the finest crops I have seen have risen from January plants; though it were best it were done in September. How do you report about the rats?"

"The nuisance is still great," replied the head superintendent. "Their uninterrupted possession of the fields during the troubles has made them very powerful. Would that your excellency were as powerful to conquer the rats as the mulattoes!"

"We have allies," said Toussaint, gravely;

"an army more powerful than that which I command. Where are the ants?"

"They have closed their campaign. They cleared the fields for us in the autumn; but they have disappeared."

"For a time only. While there are rats, they will re-appear."

"And when there are no more rats, we must call in some force, if your excellency knows of such, to make war upon the ants; for they are only a less evil than that which they cure."

"If they were absent, you would find some worse evil in their stead—pestilence, perhaps. Teach your children this, if you hear them complain of any thing to which Providence has given life and an errand among us. The cacao-walks at Plaisance—are they fenced to the north?"

"Completely. The new wood has sprung up from the ashes of the fires, like a mist from the lake."

"Are the cottages enlarged and divided, as I recommended?"

"Universally. Every cottage inhabited by a family has now two rooms at least. As your excellency also desired, the cultivators have spent their leisure hours in preparing furniture—from bedsteads to baskets. As the reports will explain, there are some inventions which it is hoped will be inspected by your excellency; particularly a ventilator, to be fixed in the roofs of cottages, a broad shoe for walking over the salt-marshes, and—"

"The cooler," prompted a voice from behind.

"And a new kind of cooler, which preserves liquids, and even meats, for a longer time than any previously known to the richest planter in the island. This discovery does great credit to the sagacity of the laborer who has completed it."

"I will come and view it. I hope to visit all our cultivators—to verify your reports with my own eyes. At present we are compelled, like the Romans, to go from arms to the plow, and from the plow to arms; but, when possible, I wish to show that I am not a negro of the coast, with my eye ever abroad upon the sea or on foreign lands. I desire that we should make use of our own means for our own welfare. Every thing that is good shall be welcomed from abroad as it arrives; but the liberty of the blacks can be secured only by the prosperity of their agriculture."

"I do not see why not by fisheries," observed Paul to the party in the piazza, as he caught his brother's words. "If Toussaint is not fond of fish, he should remember that other people are."

"He means," said Thérèse, "that toil, peaceful toil, with its hope and its due fruit, is best for the blacks. Now you know, Paul L'Ouverture, that if the fields of the ocean had required as much labor as those of the plain, you would never have been a fisherman."

"It is pleasanter on a hot day to dive than to dig; and easier to draw the net for an hour

than to cut canes for a day—is it not, uncle ?” asked Aimée.

“If the commander-in-chief thinks toil good for us,” said Moysé, “why does he disparage war? Who knows better than he what are the fatigues of a march? and the wearisomeness of an ambush is greater still. Why does he, of all men, disparage war?”

“Because,” said madame, “he thinks there has been enough hatred and fighting. I have to put him in mind of his own glory in war, or he would be always forgetting it—except, indeed, when any one comes from Europe. When he hears of Bonaparte, he smiles; and I know he is then glad that he is a soldier too.”

“Besides his thinking that there has been too much fighting,” said Aimée, “he wishes that the people should labor joyfully in the very places where they used to toil in wretchedness for the whites.”

Thérèse turned to listen with fire in her eyes.

“In order,” continued Aimée, “that they may lose the sense of that misery, and become friendly toward the whites.”

Thérèse turned away again languidly.

“There are whites now entering,” said Paul; “not foreigners, are they?”

“No,” said madame. “Surely they are creoles—yes, there is M. Caze, and M. Hugonin, and M. Charrier. I think these gentlemen have all been reinstated in their properties since the last levée. Hear what they say.”

“We come,” exclaimed aloud M. Caze, the spokesman of the party of white planters, “we come overwhelmed with amazement, penetrated with gratitude, to lay our thanks at your feet. All was lost. The estates on which we were born, the lands bequeathed to us by our fathers, were wrenched from our hands, ravaged, and destroyed. We and our families fled—some to the mountains, some to the woods, and many to foreign lands. Your voice reached us, inviting us to our homes. We trusted that voice; we find our lands restored to us, our homes secure, and the passions of war stilled, like this atmosphere after the storms of December. And to you do we owe all—to you, possessed by a magnanimity of which we had not dared to dream!”

“These passions of war of which you speak,” said Toussaint, “need never have raged if God had permitted the whites to dream what was in the souls of the blacks. Let the past now be forgotten. I have restored your estates because they were yours; but I also perceive advantages in your restoration. By circumstances (not by nature but by circumstances) the whites have been able to acquire a wide intelligence, a depth of knowledge, from which the blacks have been debarred. I desire for the blacks a perpetual and friendly intercourse with those who are their superiors in education. As residents, therefore, you are welcome; and your security and welfare shall be my care. You find your estates peopled with cultivators?”

“We do.”

“And you understand the terms on which the labor of your fellow-citizens may be hired? You have only to secure to them one-fourth of the produce, and you will, I believe, be well served. If you experience cause of complaint, your remedy will be found in an appeal to the Superintendent of Cultivators of the district or to myself. Over the cultivators no one else, I now intimate to you, has authority.”

The gentlemen bowed, having nothing to say on this head.

“It may be in your power,” continued Toussaint, after applying to his secretary for a paper from the mass on the table, “it may be in your power to do a service to the colony, and to individuals mentioned in this paper, by affording information as to where they are to be found, if alive—which of them are dead—and which of the dead have left heirs. Many estates remain unclaimed. The list is about to be circulated in the colony in France, and in the United States. If you should chance to be in correspondence with any of the owners or their heirs, make it known to them from me that they will be welcome here, as you are. In the mean time, we are taking the best care in our power of their estates. They must rebuild such of their houses as have been destroyed; but their lands are cultivated under a commission, a part of the produce being assigned to the cultivators, the rest to the public treasury.”

Toussaint read the list, watching, as did every one present, the countenances of the creoles as each name was pronounced. They had information to offer respecting one or two only; to the rest they gave sighs or mournful shakes of the head.

“It is afflicting to us all,” said Toussaint, “to think of the slaughter and exile of those who drank wine together in the white mansions of yonder plain. But a wiser cheerfulness is henceforth to spread its sunshine over our land, with no tempest brewing in its heats.”

“Have we heard the whole list?” asked M. Charrier, anxiously.

“All except three, whose owners or agents have been already summoned. These three are, the Athens estate, M. Dauk; the Breda estate, the attorney of which, M. Bayou—”

“Is here!” cried a voice from the lower part of the room. “I landed just now,” exclaimed Bayou, hastening with extended arms to embrace Toussaint; “and I lose not a moment—”

“Gently, sir,” said the commander-in-chief, drawing back two steps. “There is now a greater distance between me and you than there once was between you and me. There can be no familiarity with the chief of a newly-redeemed race.”

M. Bayou fell back, looking in every face around him to see what was thought of this. Every face was grave.

“I sent for you,” resumed Toussaint, in a mild voice, “to put you at the head of the in-

terests of the good old masters; for the good alone have been able to return. Show us what can be done with the Breda estate with free laborers. Make the blacks work well. Be not only just, but firm. You were formerly too mild a master. Make the blacks work well, that, by the welfare of your small interests, you may add to the general prosperity of the administration of the commander-in-chief of St. Domingo."

M. Bayou had no words ready. He stared round him upon the black officers in their splendid uniforms, upon the trains of liveried servants, handing coffee, and fruits, and sanga-ree, on trays and salvers of massive silver, and on the throng of visitors who crowded upon one another's heels, all anxious, not merely to pay their respects, but to offer their enthusiastic homage at the feet of his former slave. His eye at length fixed upon the windows, through which he saw something of the outline of the group of ladies.

"You desire to greet Madame L'Ouverture?" said Toussaint, kindly. "You shall be conducted to her." And one of the aids stepped forward to perform the office of introducer.

M. Bayou pulled from his pocket, on his way to the window, a shagreen jewel-case; and, by the time he was in front of madame, he had taken from it a rich gold chain, which he hung on her neck, saying, with a voice and air strangely made up of jocoseness, awkwardness, and deference,

"I have not forgotten, you see, though I suppose you have, what you gave me one day long ago. I tried to bring back something prettier than I carried away—something for each of you—but—I don't know—I find every thing here so different from what I had any idea of—so very strange—that I am afraid you will despise my little presents."

While speaking, he shyly held out little parcels to Génifrède and Aimée, who received them graciously, while their mother replied,

"In those old days, M. Bayou, we had nothing really our own to give; and you deserved from us any aid that was in our power. My daughters and I now accept with pleasure the tokens of friendship that you bring. I hope no changes have taken place which need prevent our being friends, M. Bayou."

He scarcely heard her.

"Is it possible," cried he, "that these can be your girls? Aimée I might have known; but can this lady be Génifrède?"

Génifrède looked up with a smile, which perplexed him still further.

"I do not know that I ever saw a smile from her before; and she would not so much as lift up her head at one of my jokes. One could never gain her attention with any thing but a ghost-story. But I see how it is," he added, stooping, and speaking low to her mother, while he glanced at Moysé; "she has learned at last the old song that she would not listen to when I wanted to tell her fortune:

'Your heart's your own this summer day;
To-morrow t'will be changed away.'

And Aimée—is she married?"

"Aimée is a widow—at least so we call her," said her mother, smiling. "Isaac (you remember Placide and Isaac), her brother Isaac is all the world to her, and he is far away."

Aimée's eyes were full of tears in a moment; but she looked happy, as she always did when Isaac was spoken of as her own peculiar friend.

"I was going to ask about your boys," said Bayou. "The little fellow who used to ride the horses to water, almost before he could walk alone—he and his brothers, where are they?"

"Denis is with his tutor in the palace here. Placide and Isaac are at Paris."

"At Paris! For education?"

"Partly so."

"And partly," interposed Paul, "for an object in which you, sir, have an interest, and respecting which you ought therefore to be informed. There are those who represent my brother's actions as the result of personal ambition. Such persons have perpetually accused him to the French Government as desiring to sever the connection between the two races, and therefore between this colony and France. At the moment when these charges were most strongly urged, and most nearly believed, my brother sent his two elder sons to Paris, to be educated for their future duties under the care of the Directory. I hope, sir, you see in this act a guarantee for the safety and honor of the whites in St. Domingo."

"Certainly, certainly. All very right, very satisfactory."

"Every body who understands thinks all that the commander-in-chief does quite right," said madame, with so much of her old tone and manner as made Bayou ready to laugh. He turned to Paul, saying,

"May I ask if you are the brother who used to reside on the northern coast—if I remember right?"

"I am. I am Paul—Paul L'Ouverture." He sighed as he added, "I do not live on the northern coast now. I am going to live on the southern coast—in a palace instead of my old hut."

"M. Bayou will see—M. Bayou will hear," interrupted madame, "if he will stay out the levée. You will not leave us to-day, M. Bayou."

M. Bayou bowed. He then asked if he had the pleasure of any acquaintance with the other lady, who had not once turned round since he arrived. Thérèse had indeed sat with her face concealed for some time past.

"Do not ask her," said Aimée, eagerly, in a low voice. "We do not speak to her of old times. She is Madame Dessalines."

"The lady of General Dessalines," said madame. "Shall I introduce you?"

She called to Thérèse. Thérèse just turned round to notice the introduction, when her attention was called another way by two officers,

who brought her some message from Toussaint. That one glance perplexed M. Bayou as much as any thing he had seen. That beautiful face and form were not new to him; but he had only a confused impression as to where and when he had seen them. He perceived, however, that he was not to ask. He followed her with his eyes as she rose from her low seat, and placed herself close by one of the open jalousies, so as to hear what passed within.

"It is the English deputation," said Paul. "Hear what my brother will say."

"What will become of them?" said madame. "I do not know what would become of me if my husband was ever as angry with me as I know he is with them."

There were indeed signs of wrath in the countenance which was commonly gentle as the twilight. The rigid uprightness of his figure, the fiery eye, the distended nostril, all showed that Toussaint was struggling with anger. Before him stood a group of Englishmen—a sailor holding a wand, on which was fixed a small white banner, two gentlemen in plain clothes, the captain of the frigate which rode in the bay, and a colonel of the English troops in Jamaica.

"It is all very well, gentlemen," Toussaint was saying; "it is all very well as regards the treaty. Twenty-four hours ago we should have had no difficulty in concluding it. But what have you to say to this treatment of women on board the schooner you captured? What have you to say to your act of taking all the gentlemen out of your prize (except one who would not quit his sister), leaving the ladies in charge of a brutal prize-master, who was drunk—was it not so?" he added, turning to one of his officers.

"It was: he was drunk, and refused the ladies access to their trunks of clothes, denied them the wine left for their use, and alarmed them extremely by his language. These ladies were wives of our most distinguished officers."

"It matters not whose wives they were," said Toussaint: "they were women; and I will treat with none who thus show themselves not to be men."

"We do not ask you to treat with my prize-master," said Captain Reynolds. "If it be true—"

"It is true," said a voice from the window, to which all listened in a moment. "My maid and I were on board that schooner, from which we landed four hours ago. It is true that we were confined to the cabin, denied the refreshments that were before our eyes, and the use of our own clothes; and it is true that the oaths and threats of a drunken man were in our ears all night. When morning came, we looked out to see if we were really in the seas of St. Domingo. It seemed as if we had been conveyed where the whites are still paramount." And Thérèse indignantly walked away.

"You hear!" said Toussaint. "And you ask me to trade with Jamaica! While per-

mitted to obtain provisions from our coast, you have captured a French schooner and a sloop on our seas; you have insulted our women; and now you propose a treaty! If it were not for that banner, you would have to treat for mercy."

"When shall I be permitted to speak?" asked Captain Reynolds.

"Now."

"The blame is mine. I appointed a prize-master, who, it now appears, was not trustworthy. I was not aware of this; and I left in the cabin, for the use of the ladies, all their own property, two cases of wine, and such fruits as I could obtain for them. I lament to find that my confidence was misplaced; and I pledge myself that the prize-master shall be punished. After offering my apologies to the offended ladies, I will retire to my ship, leaving this business of the treaty to appear as unconnected as it really is with this mischance. Allow me to be conducted to the presence of the ladies."

"I will charge myself with your apologies," said Toussaint, who knew that any white stood a small chance of a good reception from Thérèse. "I accept your acknowledgment of error, Capt. Reynolds, and shall be ready to proceed with the treaty, on proof of the punishment of the prize-master. Gentlemen, I regard this treaty with satisfaction, and am willing to inclose this small tract of peace in the midst of the dreary wilderness of war. I am willing to see trade established between Jamaica and St. Domingo. There are days when your blue mountains are seen from our shores. Let tomorrow be a bright day, when no cloud shall hide us from one another's friendship."

"To-morrow," the deputation from Jamaica agreed, as they bowed themselves out of the presence of the commander-in-chief.

"More English! more English!" was whispered round, when the name of Gauthier was announced.

"No; not English," observed some, on seeing that the five who now entered, though in the English uniform, were mulattoes.

"Not English," said Toussaint, aloud. "English soldiers are honorable, whether as friends or foes. When we meet with the spying eye and the bribing hand, we do not believe them to be English. Such are the eyes and hands of these men. They have the audacity to present themselves as guests, when their own hearts should tell them they are prisoners."

"Prisoners!" exclaimed Gauthier and his companions.

"Yes, surely—prisoners. Your conduct has already been judged by a military commission, and you are sentenced. If you have more to say than you had to plead to me, say it when I have read."

Toussaint took from among the papers on the table a letter brought, as Gauthier alleged, from the English commander, Sir Thomas Brisbane, declaring Gauthier empowered to treat for the delivery to the British of the posts of

Gonaïves, Les Verrettes, and some others, in order to secure to the British the freedom of the windward passage. Toussaint declared that the messengers had brought with them bags of money, with which they had endeavored to bribe him to this treachery. He asked of them if this were not true.

"It is," said Gauthier; "but we and our authorities acted upon the precedent of your former conduct."

"What former conduct? Did these hands ever receive gold from the coffers of an enemy? Speak freely. You shall not suffer from any thing you may say here."

"You have been the means by which posts have been delivered to an enemy. We remember hearing of the surrender of Marmalade, Gros Morne, and some others."

"I was the means, as you say; but it was done by a wiser will and a stronger hand than mine. In that transaction my heart was pure. My design was to lose rank, and to return to poverty by the step I took. You ought to have inquired into facts, clearly understood by all who know me, before you proceeded to insult me. Have you more to say?"

"It was natural that we should believe that he through whom posts had been delivered would deliver posts again; and this was confirmed by rumors, and, I believe, even by letters, which seemed to come from yourself, in relation to the posts now in question."

Gauthier appealed to his companions, who all assented.

"There are other rumors concerning me," said Toussaint, "which could not be perverted; and to these you should have listened. My actions are messages addressed to the whole world—letters which can not be forged; and these alone you should have trusted. Such misunderstanding as yours could hardly have been foreseen; but it will be my fault if it be repeated. The name of the First of the Blacks must never again be associated with bribery. You are sentenced by a military commission, before which your documents have been examined, to run the gauntlet. The sentence will immediately be executed in the Place d'Armes."

"Are you aware," cried Gauthier, "that I was second in command at St. Marc when it was in the possession of the British?"

"I am aware of it."

"This is enmity to our color," said another.

"To our being mulattoes we owe our disgrace."

"I have beloved friends of your color," said Toussaint. "Believe me, however, the complexion of your souls is so disgusting, that I have no attention to spare for your faces. You must now depart."

"Change our punishment!" said Gauthier. "Consider that I am an emigrant officer. Some other punishment!"

"No other," said Toussaint. "This is the fit punishment—mean as your design—ridiculous as your attempt. Are the French com-

missaries in waiting, Laroche? Let them be announced."

The prisoners were removed by one door, while the imposing party from France entered by the other.

Commissary Hédouville, who had been for some time resident at Cap Français, entered, followed by a party of his countrymen just arrived from Paris. There was among them one, at sight of whom Toussaint's countenance changed, while an exclamation was heard from the piazza, which showed that his family were moved like himself. The person who excited this emotion was a young black officer, who entered smiling, and as if scarcely able to keep his place behind the commissary and General Michel, the head of the new deputation.

The commander-in-chief quitted his station, and advanced some steps, seizing the officer's hand, and asking eagerly,

"Vincent! Why here? My boys—how, where are they?"

"They are well: both well and happy in our beloved Paris. I am here with General Michel; sent by the Government with gifts and compliments, which—"

"Which we will speak of when I have offered my welcome to these representatives of the Government we all obey," said Toussaint, turning to the commissary and the general, and remembering that his emotions as a father had caused him, for the moment, to lose sight of the business of the hour. He made himself the usher of the French commissaries to the sofa, in front of which he had himself been standing. There he would have seated Hédouville and General Michel. Hédouville threw himself down willingly enough, but the newly-arrived messenger chose to stand.

"I come," said he, "the bearer to you of honors from the Republic, which I delight to present as the humblest of your servants. Not a word of apology for your graceful action of welcome to Brigadier-general Vincent! What so graceful as the emotions of the parent's heart? I understand—I am aware—he went out as the guardian of your sons, and your first welcome was therefore due to him. The office of guardian of your sons is, ought to be, in your eyes, more important, more sacred than that of commissary or any other. If our national deliverer—if the conqueror of Italy—if our First Consul himself were here, he ought to step back while you embrace the guardian of your sons."

The party in the piazza saw and heard all.

"If," said madame, in a whisper to Génifrède, "if these honors that they speak of come from Bonaparte—if he has answered your father's letter, your father will think his happiness complete—now we know that the boys are well."

"The First Consul has written, or will write, no doubt," said Aimée. "It must be pleasant to him as to my father, to greet a brother in destiny and in glory. Surely General Vincent

will come and speak to us—will tell us of my brothers! He looked this way just now."

"The First Consul will not write," said Moysé. "He is a white; and therefore, though a brother in destiny and in glory, he will not notice the commander-in-chief of St. Domingo."

"You are right, Moysé," said Madame Des-salines. "And it is best so."

"But that will disappoint my husband very much," said madame. "He likes the whites better than you do."

"He does," said Thérèse. "But let us listen."

Hédouville was at the moment exerting himself to introduce his secretary, M. Pascal.

"An honored name!" observed Toussaint.

"And not only in name, but by blood connected with the great man you refer to," said Hédouville.

"None are more welcome here," said Toussaint, "than those who bring with them the honors of piety, of reason, and of science." And he looked with deep interest upon the countenance of the secretary, which did in truth show signs of that thoughtfulness and sagacity, though not of the morbid suffering, which is associated in all minds with the image of the author of the *Provinciales*. M. Pascal returned the gaze which was fixed upon him with one in which intense curiosity was mingled with doubt, if not fear. His countenance immediately, however, relaxed into an expression of pleased surprise. During this brief moment, these two men, so unlike—the elderly, toil-worn negro, and the young, studious Frenchman—felt that they were friends.

M. Pascal stepped aside to make way for M. Molière.

"Are we to welcome in you," asked Toussaint, "a messenger of mirth to our society?"

The group of Frenchmen could scarcely restrain their laughter at this question. M. Molière had a most lugubrious countenance—a thing not always inconsistent with a merry humor; but M. Molière's heart was believed never to have laughed, any more than his face. He answered, as if announcing a misfortune, that he claimed no connection with the dramatist, though he believed some of his family had attempted to do so.

"M. Molière discharges the duty of a pious descendant, however," said Vincent. "He laughs himself into such a state of exhaustion every night over these immortal comedies, that he has to be carried to bed. That is the reason we see him so grave in the morning."

"Think of M. Molière as a trusted secretary of the messenger from the republic to yourself," said General Michel.

"I come," said Michel, assuming a pompous tone, "I come, associated with an officer of the republican army, M. Pétion—a native of this colony, but a stranger to yourself."

M. Pétion paid his respects. He was a mulatto, with shy and reserved manners, and an exceedingly intellectual countenance.

"We lost you early," said Toussaint, "but only to offer you the warmer welcome back. It was, as I remember, to attend the military schools of France that you left your home. Such scholars are welcome here."

"And particularly," observed Michel, "when they have also had the fortune to serve in the army of Italy, and immediately under the eye of the First Consul himself."

"Is it so? Is it really so?" exclaimed Toussaint. "I can never hear enough of the ruler of France. Tell us—but that must be hereafter. Do you come to me from him?"

"From the Government generally," replied Pétion.

An expression of disappointment, very evident to his watchful wife, passed over the face of Toussaint.

"There is no letter," she whispered to Géniffrède.

"We bring you from the Government," said Michel, "a confirmation of the dignity of commander-in-chief of this colony, conferred by Commissary Santhonax."

Toussaint bowed, but smiled not.

"See, he sighs!" said madame, sighing in echo.

"These are empty words," said Thérèse. "They give him only what they can not withhold; and at the very moment they surround him with spies."

"He says," replied madame, "that Hédouville is sent here 'to restrain his ambition.' Those were the words spoken of him at Paris, where they will not believe that he has no selfish ambition."

"They will not believe, because they can not understand. Their commander-in-chief has a selfish ambition, and they can not imagine that ours might be a man of a higher soul. But we can not help it: they are whites."

"What a dress—what a beautiful dress!" exclaimed madame, who almost condescended to stand fairly in the window, to see the presents now displayed before her husband by the commissary's servants.

"These presents," pursued General Michel, while Pétion stood aloof, as if he had no concern in the business, "this dress of embroidered velvet, and this set of arms, I am to present to you in the name of the late Directory of France, in token of their admiration of your services to the colony."

Toussaint stretched out his hand for the sword, which he immediately assumed instead of the one he wore, observing that this sword, like that which he had now laid aside, should be employed in loyal service to the republic. As he took no notice of the embroidered dress, it was conveyed away.

"Not only in the hall of government," resumed Michel, "but throughout all Europe is your name ringing to the skies. A Europe has been delivered at the Council of Ancients—"

"And an oration before the governors of the military schools," added Hédouville.

"And from Paris," said Pascal, "your reputation has spread along the shores of the Rhine, and as far north as St. Petersburg; and in the south, even to Rome."

Toussaint's ear caught a low laugh of delight from the piazza, which he thought fit alone for a husband's ear, and therefore hoped that no one else had heard.

"Enough, gentlemen," he said. "Measuring together my deeds and this applause, I understand the truth. This applause is in fact given to the powers of the negro race, and not to myself as a soldier or a man. It belongs not, therefore, to me. For my personal support, one line of a letter, one word of message from the chief of our common country, would be worth the applause of Europe of which you speak."

M. Pétion produced a sealed packet, which he delivered; and this seemed to remind General Vincent that he had one too. Toussaint was unable to refrain from tearing open first one, and then the other, in the intense hope of receiving some acknowledgment, some greeting from the "brother in destiny and in glory," who was the idol of his loyal heart. There was no word from Bonaparte among the first papers; and it was scarcely possible that there should be in the other packet; yet he could not keep his eye from it. Other eyes were watching from behind the jealousies. He cast a glance, a half smile that way; the consequence of which was that Aimée, forgetting the time, the deputation, the officers, the whole crowd, sprang into the room, and received the letter from Isaac, which was the only thing in all that room that she saw. She disappeared in another moment, followed, however, by General Vincent.

The father's smile died away from the face of Toussaint, and his brow darkened, as he caught at a glance the contents of the proclamations contained in Pétion's packet. A glance was enough. Before the eyes of the company had returned from the window, whither they had followed the apparition of Aimée, he had folded up the papers. His secretary's hand was ready to receive them, but Toussaint put them into his bosom.

"Those proclamations," said Hédonville, rising in a glow and standing by Toussaint's side, "you will immediately publish. You will immediately exhibit on your colors the words imposed, 'Brave blacks, remember that the French people alone recognize your freedom and the legality of your rights!'"

As the commissary spoke these words aloud, he looked round upon the assembled blacks, who, in their turn, all fixed their eyes upon their chief. Toussaint merely replied that he would give his best attention to all communications from the Government of France.

"In order," said Hédonville, as if in explanation of a friend's purposes, "in order to yield implicit obedience to its commands." Then resuming his seat, he observed to Toussaint, "I believe General Michel desires some little ex-

planation of certain circumstances attending his landing at Cap."

"I do," said General Michel, resuming his solemn air. "You are aware that General Vincent and I were arrested on landing?"

"I am aware of it. It was by my instant command that you were set free."

"By whose command, or by what error, then, were we arrested?"

"I hoped that full satisfaction had been afforded you by M. Raymond, the governor of Cap Français. Did he not explain to you that it was by an impulse of the irritated blacks; an impulse of which they repent, and to which they will not again yield, proceeding from anger for which there is but too much cause? As you, however, are not to be made responsible for the faults of your Government toward us, the offending parties have been amply punished."

"I," said Hédonville, from the sofa behind, "I am held responsible for the faults of our Government toward you. What are they?"

"We will discuss them at Cap," replied Toussaint. "There you will be surrounded by troops of your own color, and you will feel more at liberty to open your whole mind to me than, it grieves me to perceive, you are when surrounded by blacks. When you know the blacks better, you will become aware that the highest security is found in fully trusting them."

"What is it that you suppose we fear from the blacks?"

"When we are at Cap I will ask you what it was that you feared, M. Hédonville, when you chose to land at St. Domingo instead of at Cap; when you showed your mistrust of your fellow-citizens by selecting the Spanish city for your point of entrance upon our island. I will then ask you what it is that your Government fears, that it commits the interests of the blacks to a new legislature, which understands neither their temper nor their affairs."

"This was, perhaps, the cause of the difficulty we met with at Cap," observed General Michel.

"It is the chief cause. Some jealousy on this account is not to be wondered at; but it has not the less been punished. I would further ask," he continued, turning again to Hédonville, "what the First Consul fears, that—"

"Who ever heard of the First Consul fearing any thing?" cried Hédonville, with a smile.

"Hear it now, then."

"In this place?" said Hédonville, looking round. "In public?"

"In this place—among the most loyal of the citizens of France," replied Toussaint, casting a proud look round upon his officers and assembled friends. "If I were about to make complaints of the First Consul, I would close my doors upon you and myself, and speak in whispers. But it is known that I honor him, and hold him to my heart as a brother in destiny and in glory; though his glory is now at its height, while mine will not be so till my race is redeemed from the consequences of slavery, as well as from slavery itself. Still we are broth-

ers; and I therefore mourn his fears, shown in the documents that he sends to my soldiers, and shown no less in his sending none to me."

"I bring you from him the confirmation of your dignity," observed General Michel.

"You do so by message. The honor is received through the ear. But that which should plant it down into my heart, the greeting from a brother, is wanting. It can not be that the First of the Whites has not time, has not attention for the First of the Blacks. It is that he fears—not for himself, but for our country—he fears our ambition, our revenge. He shall experience, however, that we are loyal; from myself, his brother, to the mountain child who startles the vulture from the rock with his shouts of Bonaparte the Great. To engage our loyalty before many witnesses," he continued, once more looking round upon the assemblage, "I send this message through you, in return for that which I have received. Tell the First Consul that, in the absence of interference with the existing laws of the colony, I guarantee, under my personal responsibility, the submission to order and the devotion to France of my black brethren. Mark the condition, gentlemen, which you will pronounce reasonable. Mark the condition, and you will find happy results. You will soon see whether I pledge in vain my own responsibility and your hopes."

Even while he spoke, in all the fervor of unquestionable sincerity, of his devotion to France, his French hearers felt that he was virtually a monarch. The First of the Blacks was not only supreme in this palace and throughout the colony; he had entered upon an immortal reign over all lands trodden by the children of Africa. To the contracted gaze of the diplomatists present, all might not be visible—the coming ages when the now prophetic name of L'Ouverture should have become a bright fact in the history of man, and should be breathed in thanksgiving under the palm-tree, sung in exultation in the cities of Africa, and embalmed in the liberties of the Isles of the West: such a sovereignty as this was too vast and too distant for the conceptions of Michel and Hédouville to embrace; but they were impressed with a sense of his power, with a feeling of the majesty of his influence; and the reverential emotions which they would fain have shaken off, and which they were afterward ashamed of, were at the present moment enhanced by sounds which reached them from the avenue. There was military music, the firing of salutes, the murmur of a multitude of voices, and the tramp of horses and of men.

Toussaint courteously invited the commissaries to witness the presentation to him, for the interests of France, of the keys of the cities of the island, late in the possession of Spain, and now ceded to France by the treaty of Bâle. The commissaries could not refuse, and took their stand on one side of the First of the Blacks, while Paul L'Ouverture assumed the place of honor on the other hand.

The apartment was completely filled by the heads of the procession—the late governor of the city of St. Domingo, his officers, the magistracy of the city, and the heads of the clergy. Among these last was a face which Toussaint recognized with strong emotion. The look which he cast upon Laxabon, the gesture of greeting which he offered, caused Don Alonzo Dovaro to turn round to discover whose presence there could be more imposing to the commander-in-chief than his own. The flushed countenance of the priest marked him out as the man.

Don Alonzo Dovaro ordered the keys to be brought, and addressed himself in Spanish to Toussaint. Toussaint did not understand Spanish, and knew that the Spaniard could speak French. The Spaniard, however, chose to deliver up a Spanish city in no other language than that of his nation. Father Laxabon stepped forward eagerly, with an offer to be interpreter. It was an opportunity he was too thankful to embrace; a most favorable means of surmounting the awkwardness of renewed intercourse with one, by whom their last conversation could not be supposed to be forgotten.

"This is well—this fulfillment of the treaty of Bâle," said Toussaint. "But it would have been better if the fulfillment had been more prompt. The time for excuses and apologies is past. I merely say, as sincerity requires, that the most speedy fulfillment of treaties is ever the most honorable; and that I am guiltless of such injury as may have arisen from calling off ten thousand blacks from the peaceful pursuits of agriculture and commerce, to march them to the gates of St. Domingo. You, the authorities of this city, compelled me to lead them there, in enforcement of the claims of France. If warlike thoughts have sprung up in those ten thousand minds, the responsibility is not mine. I wish that nothing but peace should be in the hearts of all men of all races. Have you wishes to express in the name of the citizens? Show me how I can gratify them."

"Don Alonzo Dovaro explains," said the interpreter, "that it will be acceptable to the Spanish inhabitants that you take the customary oath, in the name of the Holy Trinity, respecting the government of the whole region."

"It is indeed a holy duty. What is the purpose of the oath?"

"In the name of the Holy Trinity, to govern wisely and well."

"Has there lived a Christian man who would take that oath?"

"Every governor of the Spanish colony in this island, from Diego, the brother of Columbus, to this day."

"What is human wisdom," said Toussaint, "that a man should swear that he will be always wise? What is human virtue, that he should pledge his salvation on governing well? I dare not take the oath."

The Spaniards showed that they understood

French by the looks they cast upon each other, before Laxabon could complete his version.

"This, however, will I do," said Toussaint. "I will meet you to-morrow, at the great church in Port au Prince, and there bind myself before the altar, before the God who hears me now, on behalf of your people, to be silent on the past, and to employ my vigilance and my toils in rendering happy the Spanish people, now become my fellow-citizens of France."

A profusion of obeisances proved that this was satisfactory. The late governor of the city took from one of his officers the velvet cushion on which were deposited the keys of St. Domingo, and transferred it to the hands of the commander-in-chief. At the moment there was an explosion of cannon from the terrace on which stood the town; the bells rang in all the churches; and bursts of military music spread over the calm bay, with the wreaths of white smoke from the guns. The flamingoes took flight again from the strand; the ships moved in their anchorage; the shouts of the people arose from the town, and those of the soldiery from the square of the great avenue. Their idol, their Overture, was now in command of the whole of the most beautiful of the isles of the west.

As soon as he could be heard, Toussaint introduced his brother to the Spaniards. Placing the cushion containing the keys upon the table, and laying his hand upon the keys, he declared his intention of giving to the inhabitants of the city of St. Domingo a pledge of the merciful and gentle character of the government under which they were henceforth to live, in the person of the new governor, Paul L'Overture, who had never been known to remember unkindness from day to day. The new governor would depart for the east of the island on the morrow, from the door of the church, at the close of the celebration.

The levée was now over. Spanish, French, and the family and guests of the commander-in-chief were to meet at a banquet in the evening. Meantime, Toussaint and his brother stepped out together upon the northern piazza, and the room was cleared.

"I wish," said Paul, "that you had appointed any one but me to be governor of that city. How should a poor negro fisherman like me govern a city?"

"You speak like a white, Paul. The whites say of me, 'How should a poor negro postilion govern a colony?' You must do as I do—show that a negro can govern."

"But Heaven made you for a ruler."

"Who thought so while I was yet a slave? As for you, I know not what you can do till you have tried; nor do you. I own that you are not the man I should have appointed, if I had had a choice among all kinds of men."

"Then look around for some other."

"There is no other, on the whole, so little unfit as you. Henri must remain in the field while Rigaud is in arms. Jacques—"

"Ay, Dessalines . . . and he might have a court—such a wife as he would carry."

"Dessalines must not govern a city of whites. He hates the whites. His passion of hatred would grow with power, and the Spaniards would be wretched. They are now under my protection. I must give them a governor who can not hate, and therefore I send you. Your love of our people and of me, my brother, will rouse you to exertion and self-denial. For the rest, you shall have able counselors on the spot. For your private guidance I shall be ever at your call. Confide wholly in me, and your appeal shall never be unanswered."

"You shall be governor, then. I will wear the robes, and your head shall do the work. I will amuse the inhabitants with water-parties, and you—"

"No more of this!" said Toussaint, somewhat sternly. "It seems that you are unwilling to do your part of the great duty of our age and our race. Heaven has appointed you the opportunity of showing that blacks are men—fit to govern as to serve; and you would rather sleep in the sunshine than listen to the message from the sky. My own brother does what he can to deepen the brand on the forehead of the negro!"

"I am ashamed, brother," said Paul. "I am not like you: but yet I will do what I can. I will go to-morrow, and try whether I can toil as you do. There is one thing I can do which Henri, and Jacques, and even you can not—I can speak Spanish."

"You have discovered one of your qualifications, dear Paul. You will find more. Will you take Moyses with you?"

"Let it be a proof that I can deny myself, that I leave my son with you. Moyses is passionate."

"I know it," said Toussaint.

"He governs both his love and his hatred before you, while with me he indulges them. He must remain with you, in order to command his passions. He inherited them from me, and I must thus far help him to master them. You are all-powerful with him. I have no power."

"You mean that Génifrède and I together are all-powerful with him. I believe it is so."

"To you, then, I commit him. Moyses is henceforth your son."

"As Génifrède is your daughter, Paul. If I die before the peace of the island is secured, there are two duties which I assign to you—to support the spirit of the blacks, and to take my Génifrède for your daughter. The rest of my family love each other, and the world we live in. She loves only Moyses."

"She is henceforth my child. But when will you marry them?"

"When Moyses shall have done some act to distinguish himself, for which he shall not want opportunity. I have a higher duty than that to my family; it is my duty to call out all the powers of every black. Moyses must therefore prove what he can do before he can marry his

love. For him, however, this is an easy condition."

"I doubt not you are right, brother; but it is well for me that the days of my love are past."

"Not so, Paul. The honor of your race must now be your love. For this you must show what you can do."

They had paced the northern piazza while conversing. They now turned into the eastern, where they came upon the lovers, who were standing half shrouded by creeping plants—Moyses's arm round Génifrède's waist, and Génifrède's head resting on her lover's shoulder. The poor girl was sobbing violently, while Moyses was declaring that he would marry her, with or without consent, and carry her with him, if he was henceforth to live in the east of the island.

"Patience, foolish boy!" cried his father. "You go not with me. I commit you to my brother. You will stay with him, and yield him the duty of a son—a better duty than we heard you planning just now."

"As soon as you prove yourself worthy, you shall be my son indeed," said Toussaint. "I have heard your plans of marriage. You shall hear mine. I will give you opportunities of distinguishing yourself, in the services of the city and of the field. After the first act which proves you worthy of responsibility, I will give you Génifrède. As a free man, can you desire more?"

"I am satisfied, I am grateful," said Moyses. "I believe I spoke some hasty words just now; but we supposed I was to be sent among the whites—and I had so lately returned from the south—and Génifrède was so wretched!"

Génifrède threw herself on her father's bosom with broken words of love and gratitude. It was the first time she had ever voluntarily approached so near him; and she presently drew back, and glanced in his face with timid awe.

"My Génifrède! My child!" cried Toussaint, in a rapture of pleasure at this loosening of the heart. He drew her toward him, folded his arms about her, kissed the tears from her cheek, and hushed her sobs, saying, in a low voice, which touched her very soul,

"He can do great deeds, Génifrède. He is yours, my child; but we shall all be proud of him."

She looked up once more with a countenance so radiant, that Toussaint carried into all the toils and observances of the day the light heart of a happy father.

Rigand and his forces were so safely engaged in the south, that the plain was considered secure from their incursions. Port au Prince, surrounded on three sides by hills, was now becoming so hot, that such of its inhabitants as had estates in the country were glad to retire to them as soon as the roads were declared safe; and among these were the family of the commander-in-chief, who, with tutors, visitors, and attendants, formed the group seen in the Cul-de-Sac this day. They were removing to their estate of Pongandin, on the shores of the Bay of Gonaves, a little to the north of the junction of the Artibonite with the sea; but, instead of traveling straight and fast, they intended to make a three days' journey of what might have been accomplished in less than two; partly for the sake of the pleasure of the excursion, and partly to introduce their friends from Europe to some of the beauties of the most beautiful island in the world.

Madame L'Ouverture had had presents of European carriages, in which she did not object to take airings in the towns and their neighborhood; but nowhere else were the roads in a state to bear such heavy vehicles. In the sandy bridle-paths they would have sunk half their depth; in the green tracks they would have been caught in thickets of brambles and low boughs; while many swamps occurred which could be crossed only by single horses accustomed to pick their way in uncertain ground. The ladies of the colony, therefore, continued, as in all time past, to take their journeys on horseback, each attended by some one—a servant, if there were neither father, brother, nor lover—to hold the umbrella over her during rain, or the more oppressive hours of sunshine.

The family of L'Ouverture had left the palace early, and were bound for an estate in the middle of the plain, where they intended to rest either till evening or till the next morning, as inclination might determine. As their train, first of horses and then of mules, passed along, now under avenues of lofty palms, which constituted a deep, moist shade in the midst of the glare of the morning; now across fields of sward, kept green by the wells which were made to overflow them; and now through swamps, where the fragrant flowering reeds reached up to the flanks of the horses and courted the hands of the riders, the inhabitants of the region watched their progress, and gave them every variety of kindly greeting. The mother, who was sitting at work under the tamarind-tree, called her children down from its topmost branches to do honor to the travelers. Many a half-naked negro in the rice-grounds slipped from the wet plank on which, while gazing, he forgot his footing, and laughed his welcome from out of the mud and slime. The white planters, who were taking their morning ride over their estates, bent to the saddle-bow, the large straw hat in hand, and would not cover their heads from the hot sun till the ladies had passed. These planters' wives and daughters,

CHAPTER XI.

L'ETOILE AND ITS PEOPLE.

ONE radiant day of the succeeding spring, a party was seen in the plain of Cul-de-Sac, moving with such a train as showed that one of the principal families of the island was traveling.

seated at the shaded windows or in the piazzas of their houses, rose and courtesied deep to the ladies L'Ouverture. Many a little black head rose dripping from the clear waters, gleaming among the reeds, where negro children love to watch the gigantic dragon-flies of the tropics creeping from their sheaths, and to catch them as soon as they spread their gauzy wings and exhibit their gem-like bodies to the sunlight. Many a group of cultivators in the cane-grounds grasped their arms on hearing the approach of numbers (taught thus by habitual danger), but swung back the gun across the shoulder, or tucked the pistol again into the belt, at sight of the ladies; and then ran to the road-side to remove any fancied obstruction in the path, or, if they could do no more, to smile a welcome. It was observable that, in every case, there was an eager glance, in the first place, of search for L'Ouverture himself; but when it was seen that he was not there, there was still all the joy that could be shown where he was not.

The whole country was full of song. As M. Loisir, the architect from Paris, said to Génifrède, it appeared as if vegetation itself went on to music. The servants of their own party sang in the rear; Moysé and Denis, and sometimes Denis's sisters, sang as they rode; and if there was not song already on the track, it came from behind every flowering hedge, from the crown of the cocoa-nut-tree, from the window of the cottage. The sweet, wild note of the mocking-bird was awakened in its turn; and from the depths of the tangled woods, where it might defy the human eye and hand, it sent forth its strain, shrill as the thrush, more various than the nightingale, and sweeter than the canary. But for the bird, the Spanish painter Azua would have supposed that all this music was the method of reception of the family by the peasantry; but, on expressing his surprise to Aimée, she answered that song was as natural to St. Domingo when freed, as the light of sun or stars when there were no clouds in the sky. The heart of the negro was, she said, as naturally charged with music as his native air with fragrance. If you dam up his mountain streams, you have, instead of fragrance, poison and pestilence; and if you chain up the negro's life in slavery, you have, for music, wailing and curses. Give both free course, and you have an atmosphere of spicy odors and a universal spirit of song.

"This last," said Azua, "is as one long but varied ode in honor of your father. Men of some countries would watch him as a magician after seeing the wonders he has wrought. Who, looking over this wide level, on which Plenty seems to have emptied her horn, would believe how lately and how thoroughly it was ravaged by war?"

"There seems to be magic in all that is made," said Aimée; "so that all are magicians who have learned to draw it forth. M. Loisir was showing us yesterday how the lightning may now be brought down from the thunder-

cloud, and carried into the earth at some given spot. Our servants, who have yearly seen the thunder-bolt fire the cottage or the mill, tremble, and call the lightning-rods magic. My father is a magician of the same sort, except that he deals with a deeper and higher magic."

"That which lies in men's hearts—in human passions."

"In human affections; by which he thinks more in the end is done than by their passions."

"Did you learn this from himself?" asked Azua, who listened with much surprise and curiosity to this explanation from the girl by whose side he rode. "Does your father explain to you his views of men, and his purposes with regard to them?"

"There is no need," she replied. "From the books he has always read, we know what he thinks of men's minds and ways; and from what happens, we learn his purposes; for my father always fulfills his purposes."

"And who led you to study his books and observe his purposes?"

"My brother Isaac."

"One of those who is studying at Paris? Does he make you study here, while he is being educated there?"

"No, he does not make me study. But I know what he is doing—I have books—Isaac and I were always companions—he learns from me what my father does. But I was going to tell you, when you began asking about my father, that this plain will not appear to you throughout so flourishing as it does now from the road. When we reach the Etoile estate you will see enough of the ravages of war."

"I have perceived some signs of desertion in a house or two that we have passed," said Azua. "But these brothers of yours—when will they return?"

"Indeed I wish I knew," sighed Aimée. "I believe that depends on the First Consul."

"The First Consul has so much to do, it is a pity their return should depend upon his memory. If he should forget, you will go and see Paris, and bring your brothers home."

"The First Consul forgets nothing," replied Aimée. "He knows and heeds all that we do here, at the distance of almost half the world. He never forgets my brothers—he is very kind to them."

"All that you say is true," said Vincent, who was now on the other side of Aimée. "Every thing that you can say in praise of the First Consul is true. But yet you should go and see Paris. You do not know what Paris is—you do not know what your brothers are like in Paris, especially Isaac. He tells you, no doubt, how happy he is there?"

"He does; but I had rather see him here."

"You have fine scenery here, no doubt, and a climate which you enjoy; but there! what streets and palaces! what theatres! what libraries and picture-galleries! and what society!"

"Is it not true, however," said Azua, "that

all the world is alike to her where her brother is?"

"This is L'Etoile," said Aimée. "Of all the country houses in the island, this was, perhaps, not the grandest, but the most beautiful. It is now ruined; but we hear that enough remains for M. Loisir to make out the design."

She turned to Vincent, and told him that General Christophe was about to build a house, and that he wished it to be on the model of L'Etoile, as it was before the war. M. Loisir was to furnish the design.

The Europeans of the party were glad to be told that they had nearly arrived at their resting-place; for they could scarcely sit their horses, while toiling in the heat through the deep sand of the road. They had left far behind them both wood and swamp, and, though the mansion seemed to be embowered in the green shade, they had to cross open ground to reach it. At length Azna, who had sunk into a despairing silence, cried out with animation,

"Ha! the opuntia! What a fence! What a wall!"

"You may know every deserted house in the plain," said Aimée, "by the cactus hedge round it."

"What ornament can the inhabited mansion have more graceful, more beautiful?" said Azna, forgetting the heat in his admiration of the blossoms, some red, some snow-white, some blush-colored, which were scattered in profusion over the thick and high cactus hedge which barred the path.

"Nothing can be more beautiful," said Aimée, "but nothing more inconvenient. See, you are setting your horse's feet into a trap." And she pointed to the stiff, prickly green shoots which matted all the ground. "We must approach by some other way. Let us wait till the servants have gone round."

With the servants appeared a tall and very handsome negro, well known throughout the island for his defense of the Etoile estate against Rigaud. Charles Bellair was a Congo chief, kidnapped in his youth, and brought into St. Domingo slavery, in which state he had remained long enough to keep all his detestation of slavery, without losing his fitness for freedom. He might have returned, ere this, to Africa, or he might have held some military office under Toussaint; but he preferred remaining on the estate which he had partly saved from devastation, bringing up his little children to revere and enthusiastically obey the commander-in-chief, the idol of their color. The heir of the Etoile estate did not appear, nor transmit his claim. Bellair, therefore, and two of his former fellow-bondsmen, cultivated the estate, paying over the fixed proportion of the produce to the public funds. Bellair hastened to lead Madame L'Ouverture's horse round to the other side of the house, where no prickly vegetation was allowed to encroach. His wife was at work, and singing to her child under the shadow of the colonnade—once an erection of great

beauty, but now blackened by fire, and at one end crumbling into ruins.

"Minerve!" cried madame, on seeing her.

"Deesha is her name," said Bellair, smiling.

"Oh, you call her by her native name! Would that we all knew our African names, as you know hers! Deesha!"

Deesha hastened forward, all joy and pride at being the hostess of the Ouverture family. Eagerly she led the way into the inhabitable part of the abode—a corner of the palace-like mansion—a corner well covered in from the weather, and presenting a strange contrast of simplicity and luxury.

The court-yard through which they passed was strewn with ruins, which, however, were almost entirely concealed by the brush-wood, through which only a lane was kept cleared for going in and out. The whole was shaded, almost as with an awning, by the shrubs which grew from the cornices, and among the rafters which had remained where the roof once was. Ropes of creepers hung down the walls, so twisted and of so long a growth, that Denis had climbed half way up the building by means of this natural ladder when he was called back again. The jalousies were decayed—starting away from their hinges, or hanging in fragments; while the window-sills were gay with flowering weeds, whose seeds even took root in the joints of the flooring within, open as it was to the dew. The marble steps and entrance-hall were kept clear of weeds and dirt, and had a strange air of splendor in the midst of the desolation. The gilding of the balustrades of the hall was tarnished; and it had no furniture but the tatters of some portraits, whose frame and substance had been nearly devoured by ants; but it was weather-tight and clean. The salon to the right constituted the family dwelling. Part of its roof had been repaired with a thatch of palm-leaves, which formed a singular junction with the portion of the ceiling which remained, and which exhibited a blue sky-ground with gilt stars. An alcove had been turned into the fire-place, necessary for cooking. The kitchen corner was partitioned off from the sitting-room by a splendid folding screen of Oriental workmanship, exhibiting birds of paradise, and the blue rivers and gilt pagodas of China. The other partitions were the work of Bellair's own hands, woven of bamboo and long grass, dyed with the vegetable dyes, with whose mysteries he was, like a true African, acquainted. The dinner-table was a marble slab, which still remained clamped to the wall, as when it had been covered with plate or with ladies' work-boxes. The seats were benches hewn by Bellair's axe. On the shelves and dresser of unpainted wood were ranged together porcelain dishes from Dresden and calabashes from the garden; wooden spoons, and knives with enameled handles. A harp, with its strings broken and its gilding tarnished, stood in one corner; and musical instruments of Congo origin hung against the wall. It was al-

together a curious medley of European and African civilization, brought together amidst the ruins of a West Indian revolution.

The young people did not remain long in the house, however tempting its coolness might have appeared. At one side of the mansion was the colonnade, which engrossed the architect's attention; on the other bloomed the garden, offering temptations which none could resist—least of all those who were lovers. Moyses and his Génifrède stepped first to the door which looked out upon the wilderness of flowers, and were soon lost sight of among the shrubs.

Génifrède had her sketch-book in her hand. She and her sister were here partly for the sake of a drawing-lesson from Azua; and perhaps she had some idea of taking a sketch during this walk with Moyses. He snatched the book from her, however, and flung it through the window of a garden-house which they passed, saying,

"You can draw while I am away. For this hour you are all my own."

"And when will you be away? Wherever you go, I will follow you. If we once part, we shall not meet again."

"We think so and we say so each time that we part, and yet we meet again. Once more—only the one time that I am to distinguish myself to gain you—only that once will we be parted, and then we will be happy forever."

"Then you will be killed—or you will be sent to France—or you will love some one else, and forget me."

"Forget you! Love some one else! Oh! heaven and earth!" cried Moyses, clasping her in his arms, and putting his whole soul into the kisses he impressed on her forehead. "And what," he continued, in a voice which thrilled her heart, "what would you do if I were killed?"

"I would die. Oh, Moyses! if it should be so, wait for me! Let your spirit wait for mine! It shall not be long."

"Shall my spirit come—shall I come as a ghost, to tell you that I am dead? Shall I come when you are alone, and call you away?"

"Oh! no, no!" she cried, shuddering. "I will follow, you need not fear. But a ghost—oh! no, no!" And she looked up at him and clasped him closer.

"And why?" said Moyses. "You do not fear me now—you cling to me. And why fear me then? I shall be yours still. I shall be Moyses. I shall be about you—haunting you, whether you see and hear me or not. Why not see and hear me?"

"Why not?" said Génifrède, in a tone of assent. "But I dare not—I will not. You shall not die. Do not speak of it."

"It was not I, but you, love, that spoke of it. Well: I will not die. But tell me, if I forget you—if I love another—what then?" And he looked upon her with eyes so full of love, that she laughed, and withdrew herself

from his arms, saying, as she sauntered on along the blossom-strewn path,

"Then I will forget you too."

Moyses lingered for a moment to watch her stately form as she made a pathway for herself amidst the tangled shrubs. The walk, once a smooth-shaven turf, kept green by trenches of water, was now overgrown with the vegetation which encroached on either hand. As the dark beauty forced her way, the may-pole aloe shook its yellow crown of flowers many feet above her head; the lilac jasmine danced before her face; and the white datura, the pink flower-fence, and the scarlet cordia, closed round her form or spread themselves beneath her feet. Her lover was soon again by her side, warding off every branch and spray, and saying,

"The very flowers worship you: but they and all—all must yield you to me. You are mine; and yet not mine till I have won you from your father. Génifrède, how shall I distinguish myself? Show me the way, and I shall succeed."

"Do not ask me," she replied, sighing.

"Nay, whom should I ask?"

"I never desired you to distinguish yourself."

"You do not wish it?"

"No."

"Not for your sake?"

"No."

And she looked around her with wistful eyes, in which her lover read a wish that things would ever remain as they were now—that this moment would never pass away.

"You would remain here—you would hide yourself here with me forever!" cried the happy Moyses.

"Here or anywhere—in the cottage at Breda—in your father's hut on the shore—anywhere, Moyses, where there is nothing to dread. I live in fear, and I am wretched."

"What is it that you fear, love? Why do you not trust me to protect you?"

"Then I fear for you, which is worse. Why can not we live in the woods or the mountains, where there would be no dangerous duties and no cares?"

"And if we lived in the woods, you would be more terrified still. There would never be a falling star but your heart would sink. You would take the voices of the winds for the spirits of the woods, and the mountain mists for ghosts. Then there are the tornado and the thunder-bolt. When you saw the trees crashing, you would be for making haste back to the plain. Whenever you heard the rock rolling and bounding down the steep, or the cataract rising and roaring in the midst of the tempest, you would entreat me to fly to the city. It is in this little beating heart that the fear lies."

"What, then, is to be done?"

"This little heart must beat yet a while longer; and then, when I have once come back, it shall rest upon mine forever."

"Beside my father? He never rests. Your

father would leave us in peace; but he has committed you to one who knows not what rest is."

"Nor ever will," said Moyses. "If he closed his eyes, if he relaxed his hand, we should all be sunk in ruin."

"We? Who? What ruin?"

"The whole negro race. Do you suppose the whites are less cruel than they were? Do you believe that their thirst for our humiliation, our slavery, is quenched? Do you believe that the white man's heart is softened by the generosity and forgiveness of the blacks?"

"My father believes so," replied Génifère; "and do they not adore him—the whites whom he has reinstated? Do they not know that they owe to him their lives, their homes, the prosperity of the island? Does he not trust the whites? Does he not order all things for their good, from reverence and affection for them?"

"Yes, he does," replied Moyses, in a tone which made Génifère anxiously explore his countenance.

"You think him deceived?" she said.

"No, I do not. It is not easy to deceive L'Ouverture."

"You do not think—no, you can not think that he deceives the whites, or any one."

"No. L'Ouverture deceives no one. As you say, he reveres the whites. He reveres them for their knowledge. He says they are masters of an intellectual kingdom from which we have been shut out, and they alone can let us in. And then again—Génifère, it seems to me that he loves best those who have most injured him."

"Not best," she replied. "He delights to forgive: but what white has he ever loved as he loves Henri? Did he ever look upon any white as he looked upon me, when—when he consented. Moyses, you remember?"

"I do. But still he loves the whites as if they were born, and had lived and died, our friends, as he desires they should be. Yet more: he expects and requires that all his race should love them too."

"And you do not?" said Génifère, timidly.

"I abhor them."

"Oh! hush! hush! Speak lower. Does my father know this?"

"Why should he? If he once knew it—"

"Nay, if he knew it, he would give up his purposes of distinction for you, and we might live here or on the shore."

"My Génifère, though I hate the whites, I love the blacks. I love your father. The whites will rise upon us at home, as they are always scheming against us in France, if we are not strong—and as watchful as we are strong. If I and others leave L'Ouverture alone to govern, and betake ourselves to the woods and the mountains, the whites will again be masters, and you and I, my Génifère, shall be slaves. But you shall not be a slave, Génifère," he continued, soothing her tremblings

at the idea. "The bones of the whites shall be scattered over the island, like the shells on the sea-shore, before my Génifère shall be a slave. I will cut the throat of every infant at every white mother's breast before any one of that race shall lay his grasp upon you. The whites never will, never shall again be masters; but then it must be by L'Ouverture having an army always at his command; and of that army I must be one of the officers. We can not live here or on the sea-shore, love, while there are whites who may be our masters. So, while I am away, you must pray Christ to humble the whites. Will you? This is all you can do. Will you not?"

"How can I, when my father is always exalting them?"

"You must choose between him and me. Love the whites with him, or hate them with me."

"But you love my father, Moyses?"

"I do. I adore him as the savior of the blacks. You adore him, Génifère. Every one of our race worships him. Génifère, you love him—your father."

"I know not—Yes, I loved him the other day. I know nothing but that—I will hate the whites as you do. I never loved them: now I hate them."

"You shall. I will tell you things of them that will make you curse them. I know every white man's heart."

"Then tell my father."

"Does he not know enough already? Is not his cheek furrowed with the marks of the years during which the whites were masters; and is there any cruelty, any subtlety, in them that he does not understand? Knowing all this, he curses, not them, but the power which, he says, corrupted them. He keeps from them this power, and believes all will be well. I shall tell him nothing."

"Yes, tell him all—all except—"

"Yes, and tell me first," cried a voice near at hand. There was a great rustling among the bushes, and Denis appeared, begging particularly to know what they were talking about. They, in return, begged to be told what brought him this way, to interrupt their conversation.

"Deesha says Juste is out after wild-fowl, and, most likely, among some of the ponds hereabout."

"One would think you had lived in Cap all your days," said Moyses. "Do you look for wild-fowl in a garden?"

"We will see presently," said the boy, thrusting himself into the thicket in the direction of the ponds, and guiding himself by the scent of the blossoming reeds—so peculiar as to be known among the many with which the air was filled. He presently beckoned to his sister, and she followed with Moyses, till they found themselves in the field where there had once been several fish-ponds, preserved in order with great care. All were now dried up but two; and the whole of the water being di-

verted to the service of these two, they were considerable in extent and in depth. What the extent really was, it was difficult to ascertain at the first glance, so hidden was the margin with reeds, populous with wild-fowl.

Denis was earnestly watching these fowl as he lay among the high grass at some little distance from the water, and prevented his companions from approaching any nearer. The sun was hot, and Génifrède was not long in desiring to return to the garden.

"Let us go back," said she. "Juste is not here."

"Yes he is," said Denis. "However, go back if you like. I shall go fowling with Juste." And he began to strip off his clothes.

His companions were of opinion, however, that a son of the commander-in-chief must not sport with a farmer's boy, without leave of parents or tutor; and they begged him to put on his clothes again, at least till leave was asked. Denis had never cared for his rank, except when riding by his father's side on review-days; and now he liked it less than ever, as the pond lay gleaming before him, the fowl sailing and fluttering on the surface, and his dignity prevented his going among them.

"What makes you say that Juste is here?" said Génifrède.

"I have seen him take five fowl in the last five minutes."

As he spoke, he plucked the top of a bulrush, and threw it with such good aim that it struck a calabash which appeared to be floating among others on the surface of the pond. That particular calabash immediately rose, and the face of a negro child appeared, to the consternation of the fowl, whose splashing and screaming might be heard far and wide. Juste came out of the water, displaying at his belt the result of his sport. He had, as Denis had said, taken five ducks in five minutes by pulling them under the water by the feet, while lying near them with his head covered by the calabash. The little fellow was not satisfied with the admiration of the beholders; he ran homeward, with his clothes in his hand, Denis at his heels, and his game dangling from his waist, and dripping as he ran.

"Many a white would shudder to see that child," said Moyse, as Juste disappeared. "That is the way Jean's blacks wore their trophies during the first days of the insurrection."

"Trophies!" said Génifrède. "You mean heads—heads with their trailing hair;" and her face worked with horror as she spoke. "But it is not for the whites to shudder, after what they did to Ogé, and have done to many a negro since."

"But they think we do not feel as they do."

"Not feel! O Christ! If any one of them had my heart before I knew you—in those days at Breda, when M. Bayou used to come down to us!"

"Here comes that boy again," cried Moyse. "Let us go into the thicket among the citrons."

Denis found them, however—found Moyse gathering the white and purple blossoms for Génifrède, while she was selecting the fruit of most fragrant rind from the same tree to carry into the house.

"You must come in—you must come in to dinner," cried Denis. "Aimée has had a drawing-lesson, while you have been doing nothing all this while. They said you were sketching; but I told them how idle you were."

"I will go back with Denis," said Génifrède. "You threw away my sketch-book, Moyse. You may find it, and follow us."

Their path lay together as far as the garden-house. When there, Moyse seized Denis unawares, shot him through the window into the house, and left him to get out as he might, and bring the book. The boy was so long in returning that his sister became uneasy lest some snake or other creature should have detained him in combat. She was going to leave the table in search of him, because Moyse would not, when he appeared, singing, and with the book upon his head.

"Who calls Génifrède idle?" cried he, flourishing the book. "Look here!" And he exhibited a capital sketch of herself and Moyse, as he had found them, gathering fruits and flowers.

"Can it be his own?" whispered Génifrède to her lover.

Denis nodded and laughed, while Azua gravely criticised and approved, without suspicion that the sketch was by no pupil of his own.

In the cool evening Génifrède was really no longer idle. While Denis and Juste were at play, they both at once stumbled and fell over something in the long grass, which proved to be a marble statue of a Naiad lying at length. Moyse seized it, and raised it where it was relieved by a dark-green background. The artist declared it an opportunity for a lesson which was not to be lost; and the girls began to draw as well as they could for the attempts of the boys to restore the broken urn to the arm from which it had fallen. When Denis and Juste found that they could not succeed, and were only chidden for being in the way, they left the drawing-party seated under their clump of cocoa-nut-trees, and went to hear what madame was relating to Bellair and Deesha, in the hearing of M. Molière, Laxabon, and Vincent. Her narration was one which Denis had often heard, but was never tired of listening to. She was telling of the royal descent of her husband; how he was grandson of Gaou Guinou, the king of the African tribe of Arrudos; how this king's second son was taken in battle, and sold, with other prisoners of war, into slavery; how he married an African girl on the Breda estate, and used to talk of home, and its wars, and its hunts, and its sunshine idleness; how he used thus to talk in the evenings and on Sundays to the boy upon his knee; so that Toussaint felt,

from his infancy, like an African, and the descendant of chiefs. This was a theme which Madame L'Ouverture loved to dwell on, and especially when listened to as now. The Congo chief and his wife hung upon her words, and told in their turn how their youth had been spent at home—how they had been kidnapped and delivered over to the whites. In the eagerness of their talk, they were perpetually falling unconsciously into the use of their negro language, and as often recalled by their hearers to that which all could understand. Molière and Laxabon listened earnestly; and even Loisir, occupied as he was still with the architecture of the mansion, found himself impatient if he lost a word of the story. Vincent alone, negro as he was, was careless and unmoved. He presently sauntered away, and nobody missed him.

He looked over the shoulder of the architect.

"What pains you are taking!" he said.

"You have only to follow your own fancy and convenience about Christophe's house. Christophe has never been to France. Tell him, or any others of my countrymen, that any building you choose to put up is European and in good taste, and they will be quite pleased enough."

"You are a sinner," said Loisir; "but he quiet now."

"Nay, do not you find the blacks, one and all, ready to devour your travelers' tales—your prodigious reports of European cities? You have only to tell like stories in stone and brick, and they will believe you just as thankfully."

"No, no, Vincent. I have told no tales so wicked as you tell of your own race. My travelers' tales are all very well to pass an hour and be forgotten; but Christophe's mansion is to stand for an age; to stand as the first evidence, in the department of the arts, of the elevation of your race. Christophe knows as well as you do, without having been to Paris, what is beautiful in architecture; and, if he did not, I would not treacherously mislead him."

"Christophe knows! Christophe has taste!"

"Yes. While you have been walking streets and squares, he has been studying the aisles of palms and the crypts of the banyan, which, to an open eye, may teach as much as a prejudiced mind can learn in all Rome."

"So Loisir is of those who flatter men in power!" said Vincent, laughing.

"I look farther," said Loisir; "I am working for men unborn. I am ambitious; but my ambition is to connect my name honorably with the first great house built for a negro general. My ambition is to build here a rival to the palaces of Enrope."

"Do what you will, you will not rival your own tales of them, unless you find Aladdin's lamp among these ruins."

"If you find it, you may bring it me. Azua has found something half as good—a really fine statue in the grass."

Vincent was off to see it. He found the drawing-party more eager in conversation than

about their work. Aimée was saying, as he approached,

"General Vincent declares that he is as affectionate to us as if we were the nearest to him of all the children of the empire. Did you not say so?" she asked, eagerly. "Is not the First Consul's friendship for us real and earnest? Does he not feel a warm regard for my father? Is he not like a father to my brothers?"

"Certainly," said Vincent. "Do not your brothers confirm this in their letters?"

"Do they not, Génifréde?" repeated Aimée.

"They do; but we see that they speak as they think, not as things really are."

"How can you so despise the testimony of those who see what we only hear of?"

"I do not despise them or their testimony. I honor their hearts, which forget injuries, and open to kindness. But they are young; they went from keeping cattle, and from witnessing the desolations of war here, to the first city of the world, where the first men lavish upon them instructions, and pleasures, and flatteries—and they are pleased. The greatest of all—the First of the Whites, smiles upon the sons of the First of the Blacks; and their hearts beat with enthusiasm for him. It is natural. But, while they are in Paris, we are in St. Domingo; and we may easily view affairs, and judge men differently."

"And so," said Aimée, "distrust our best friends and despise our best instructors, and all from a jealousy of race!"

"We think the jealousy of race is with them," said Moysé, bitterly. "There is not a measure of L'Ouverture's which they do not neutralize—not a fragment of authority which they will yield. As to friends, if the Consul Bonaparte is our best friend among the whites, may we be left thus far friendless!"

"You mean that he has not answered my father's letters. M. Vincent doubts not that an answer is on the way. Remember, my brothers have been invited to his table."

"There are blacks in Paris who look on," replied Moysé, dryly.

"And are there not whites too, from this island, who watch every movement?"

"Yes; and those whites are in the private closet, at the very ear of Bonaparte, whispering to him of L'Ouverture's ambition, while your brothers penetrate no farther than the salon."

"My brothers would lay down their lives for Bonaparte and France," said Aimée; "and you speak treason. I am with them."

"And with me," said Vincent, in a whisper, at her ear. "Where I find the loyal heart in woman, mine is ever loyal too."

Aimée was too much excited to understand in this what was meant. She went on:

"Here is M. Vincent, of our own race, who has lived here and at Paris—who has loved my father. You love my father and his government?" she said, with questioning eyes, interrupting herself.

"Certainly. No man is more devoted to L'Ouverture."

"Devoted to my father," pursued Aimée, "and yet devoted to Bonaparte. He is above the rivalry of races—as the First Consul is, and as Isaac is."

"Isaac and the First Consul—these are the idols of Aimée's worship," said Génifrède. "Worship Isaac still, for that is a harmless idolatry; but give up your new religion, Aimée, for it is not sound."

"Why not sound? How do you know that it is not sound?"

"When have the blacks ever trusted the whites without finding themselves bound victims in the end?"

"I have," said Vincent. "I have lived among them a life of charms, and I am free," he continued, stretching his arms to the air; "free to embrace the knees of both Bonaparte and L'Ouverture—free to embrace the world."

"The end has not come yet," said Moysé.

"What end?" asked Aimée.

"Nay, God knows what end, if we trust the French."

"You speak from prejudice," said Aimée.

"M. Vincent and my brothers judge from facts."

"We speak from facts," said Génifrède; "from—let us see—from seven—no, eight, very ugly facts."

"The eight commissaries that the colony has been blessed with," said Moysé. "If they had taken that monkey which is looking down at your drawing, Aimée, and seven of its brethren, and installed them at Cap, they would have done us all the good the commissaries have done, and far less mischief. The monkeys would have broken the mirrors, and made a hubbub within the walls of the Government-house. These commissaries, one after another, from Mirbeck to Hédouville, have insulted the colony, and sown quarrels in it from end to end."

"Mirbeck! Here is Mirbeck," said Denis, who had come up to listen. And the boy rolled himself about like a drunken man—like Mirbeck, as he had seen him in the streets of Cap.

"Then they sent St. Leger, the Irishman," continued Moysé, "who kept his hand in every man's pocket, whether black or white."

Denis forthwith had his hands, one in Vincent's pocket, the other in Azua's. Azua, however, was drawing so fast that he did not find it out.

"Then there was Roume."

"Roume? My father speaks well of Roume," said Aimée.

"He was amiable enough, but so weak that he soon had to go home, where he was presently joined by his successor, Santhonax, whom, you know, L'Ouverture had to get rid of for the safety of the colony. Then came Polverel. What the tranquillity of St. Domingo was in his day, we all remember."

Denis took off Polverel, spying from his ship at the island on which he dared not land.

"For shame, Denis!" said Aimée. "You are ridiculing him who first called my father L'Ouverture."

"And do you suppose he knew the use that would be made of the word?" asked Génifrède. "If he had foreseen its being a title, he would have contented himself with the obsequious bows I remember so well, and never have spoken the word."

Denis was forthwith bowing with might and main.

"Now, Denis, be quiet! Raymond, dear Raymond came next," and she looked up at Vincent as she praised his friend.

"Raymond is excellent as a man, whatever he may be as governor of Cap," said Moysé. "But we have been speaking of whites, not of mulattoes—which is another long chapter."

"Raymond was sent to us by France, however," said Aimée.

"So was our friend Vincent there; but that is nothing to the purpose."

"Well, who next?" cried Denis.

"Do not encourage him," said Aimée. "My father would be vexed with you for training him to ridicule the French—particularly the authorities."

"Now we are blessed with Hédouville," pursued Moysé. "There you have him, Denis—only scarcely sly, scarcely smooth enough. Yet that is Hédouville, who has his eye and his smiles at play in one place, while his heart and hands are busy in another."

"Busy," said Génifrède, "in undermining L'Ouverture's influence and counteracting his plans; but no one mentioned Ailhaud. Ailhaud—"

"Stay a moment," said Azua, whose voice had not been heard till then.

All looked at him in surprise, nobody supposing that, while so engrossed with his pencil, he could have cared for their conversation. Aimée saw at a glance that his paper was covered with caricatures of the commissaries who had been enumerated.

"You must have known them," was Aimée's involuntary testimony, as the paper went from hand to hand, amidst shouts of laughter, while Azua sat, with folded arms, perfectly grave.

"I have seen some of the gentlemen," said he, "and M. Denis helped me to the rest."

The laughter went on till Aimée was somewhat nettled. When the paper came back to her, she looked up into the tree under which she sat. The staring monkey was still there. She made a vigorous spring to hand up the creature, which the creature caught. As it sat demurely on a branch, holding the paper as if reading, while one of its companions as gravely looked over its shoulder, there was more laughter than ever.

"I beg your pardon, M. Azua," said Aimée; "but this is the only worthy fate of a piece of mockery of people wiser than ourselves, and no less kind. The negroes have hitherto been thought, at least, grateful. It seems that this

is a mistake. For my part, however, I leave it to the monkeys to ridicule the French."

Vincent seized her hand and covered it with kisses. She was abashed, and turned away when she saw her father behind her in the shade of the wood. M. Pascal, his secretary, was with him.

"My father!" "L'Ouverture!" exclaimed one after another of the party; for they all supposed he had been far away. Even Denis at once gave over pelting the monkeys, and left them to their study of the arts in peace.

"Your drawings, my daughters!" said L'Ouverture, with a smile, as if he had been perfectly at leisure. And he examined the Naiad, and then Génifrède's drawing, with the attention of an artist. Génifrède has made great progress under the eye of Moysse. Not so Aimée; her pencil had been busy all the while, but there was no Naiad on her page.

"They are for Isaac," she said, timidly. "Among all the pictures he sees, there are no—"

"No sketches of Denis and his little companions," said her father; "no cocoa-nut clumps—no broken fountains among the aloes—no groups that will remind him of home. Isaac shall presently have these, Aimée. I am on my way to Cap, and will send them."

"On your way to Cap!" cried every one, some in a tone of fear.

"To Cap," said he, "where Father Laxabon will follow me immediately with M. Pascal. By them, Aimée, you will send your packet for Isaac. My own horse is waiting."

"Do not go alone—do not go without good escort," said Moysse. "I can give you reason."

"I know your thoughts, Moysse. I go for the very reason that there are or will be troubles at Cap. The French authorities may sometimes decree and do that which we feel to be unwise—unsuitable to the blacks," he continued, with an emphasis which gave some idea of his having overheard more or less of the late conversation; "but we islanders may be more ignorant still of the thoughts and ways of their practiced race."

"But you are personally unsafe," persisted Moysse. "If you knew what is said by the officers of Hédoenville's staff—"

"They say," proceeded Toussaint, smiling, "that they only want three or four brigands to seize the ape with the Madras head-dress, and then all would go well. These gentlemen are mistaken; and I am going to prove this to them. An armed escort proves nothing. I carry something stronger still in my mind and on my tongue. General Vincent, a word with you."

While he and Vincent spoke apart, Aimée exclaimed,

"Oh, Moysse! go with my father!"

"Do not—oh, do not!" cried Génifrède. "You will never return!" she muttered to him, in a voice of terror. "Aimée, you would send him away; and my mother—all of us, are far from home. Who knows but that Rigaud—"

"Leave Rigaud to me," cried Vincent, gaily, as he rejoined the party. "I undertake Rigaud. He shall never alarm you more. Farewell, Mademoiselle Aimée! I am going to the south. Rigaud is recruiting in the name of France; and I know France too well to allow of that. I shall stop his recruiting, and choke his blasphemy with a good French sword. Farewell, till I bring you news at Pongaudin that you may ride along the southern coast as securely as in your own cauepieces."

"You are going?" said Aimée.

"This very hour. I south—L'Ouverture north—"

"And the rest to Pongaudin with the dawn," said Toussaint.

"What is your pleasure concerning me?" asked Moysse. "I wait your orders."

"I remember my promise," said Toussaint; "but I must not leave my family unprotected. You will attend them to Pongaudin, and then let me see you at Cap with the speed of the wind."

"With a speed like your own, if that be possible," said Moysse.

"Is there danger, father?" asked Génifrède, trembling.

"My child, there is danger in the air we breathe and the ground we tread on; but there is protection also everywhere."

"You will see Afra, father?" said Aimée.

"If there is danger, what will become of Afra? Her father will be in the front in any disturbance; and the Government-house is far from being the safest place."

"I will not forget Afra. Farewell, my children! Go now to your mother; and, before this hour to-morrow, I shall think of you resting at Pongaudin."

They saw him mount before the court-yard, and set off, followed by one of his two trompettes—the only horsemen in the island who could keep up with him, and therefore his constant attendants in his most important journeys. The other was gone forward, to order horses from post to post.

Vincent, having received written instructions from the secretary, set off in an opposite direction, more gay than those he left behind.

The loftiest trees of the rich plain were still touched with golden light, and the distant bay glittered so as to make the gazers turn away their eyes to rest on the purple mountains to the north: but their hearts were anxious; and they saw neither the glory nor the beauty of which they heard talk between the painter, the architect, and their host.

CHAPTER XII.

A NIGHT OF OFFICE.

As soon as Toussaint was out of hearing of his family and suite, he put his horse to its utmost speed. There was not a moment to be lost if the peace of the island was to be preserved. Faster than ever fugitive escaped from trouble and danger did the negro commander rush toward them. The union between the black and white races probably depended on his reaching Cap by the early morning, in time to prevent certain proclamations of Hédouville, framed in ignorance of the state of the colony and the people, from being published. Forty leagues lay between L'Étoile and Cap, and two mountain ridges crossed the road; but he had ridden forty leagues in a night before, and fifty in a long day, and he thought little of the journey. As he rode, he meditated the work of the next day, while he kept his eye awake, and his heart open to the beauty of the night.

He had cleared the plain, with his trompette at his heels, before the woods and fields had melted together into the purple haze of evening; and the laborers returning from the cane-pieces, with their tools on their shoulders, offered their homage to him as he swept by. Some shouted, some ran beside him, some knelt in the road and blessed him, or asked his blessing. He came to the river, and found the ford lined by a party of negroes, who, having heard and known his horse's tread above the music of pipe and drum, had thrown themselves into the water to point out the ford, and save his precious moments. He dashed through uncovered, and was lost in the twilight before their greeting was done. The evening star was just bright enough to show its image in the still salt lake, when he met the expected relay, on the verge of the mountain woods. Thence the ascent was so steep that he was obliged to relax his speed. He had observed the birds winging home to these woods; they had reached it before him, and the chirp of their welcome to their nests was sinking into silence; but the whirring beetles were abroad. The frogs were scarcely heard from the marshes below; but the lizards and crickets vied with the young monkeys in noise, while the wood was all alight with luminous insects. Wherever a twisted, fantastic cotton-tree, or a drooping wild-fig stood out from the thicket and apart, it appeared to send forth streams of green flame from every branch, so incessantly did the fire-flies radiate from every projecting twig.

As he ascended, the change was great. At length there was no more sound; there were no more flitting fires. Still as sleep rose the mountain peaks to the night. Still as sleep lay the woods below. Still as sleep was the outspread western sea, silvered by the steady stars, which shone, still as sleep, in the purple depths of heaven. Such was the starlight on that pinnacle, so large and round the silver

globes, so bright in the transparent atmosphere were their arrowy rays, that the whole vault was as one constellation of little moons, and the horse and his rider saw their own shadows in the white sands of their path. The ridge passed, down plunged the horseman, hurrying to the valley and the plain—like rocks loosened by the thunder from the mountain top. The hunter, resting on the heights from his day's chase of the wild goats, started from his sleep to listen to what he took for a threatening of storm. In a little while, the child in the cottage in the valley nestled close to its mother, scared at the flying tramp; while the trembling mother herself prayed for the shield of the Virgin's grace against the night-fiends that were abroad. Here there was a solitary light in the plain; there beside the river; and yonder behind the village; and at each of these stations were fresh horses, the best in the region, and smiling faces to tender their use. The panting animals that were left behind were caressed for the sake of the burden they had carried, and of the few kind words dropped by their rider during his momentary pause.

Thus was the plain beyond Mirbalais passed soon after midnight. In the dark, the horsemen swam the Artibonite, and leaped the sources of the Petite Rivière. The eastern sky was beginning to brighten as they mounted the highest steeps above Atalaye; and from the loftiest point, the features of the wide landscape became distinct in the cool gray dawn. Toussaint looked no longer at the fading stars. He looked eastward, where the green savannas spread beyond the reach of human eye. He looked northward, where towns and villages lay in the skirts of the mountains, and upon the verge of the rivers, and in the green recesses where the springs burst from the hill-sides. He looked westward, where the broad and full Artibonite gushed into the sea, and where the yellow bays were thronged with shipping, and every green promontory was occupied by its plantation or fishing hamlet. He paused for one instant while he surveyed what he well knew to be virtually his dominions. He said to himself that with him it rested to keep out strife from this paradise; to detect whatever devilish cunning might lurk in its by- corners, and rebuke whatever malice and revenge might linger within its bounds. With the thought he again sprang forward, again plunged down the steeps, scudded over the wilds, and splashed through the streams; not losing another moment till his horse stood trembling and foaming under the hot sun, now touching the Haut-du-Cap, where the riders had at length pulled up. Here they had overtaken the first trompette, who, having had no leader at whose heels he must follow, had been unable, with all his zeal, quite to equal the speed of his companion. He had used his best efforts, and showed signs of fatigue; but yet they had come upon his traces on the grass road from the Gros Morne, and had overtaken him as he was toiling up the Haut-du-Cap.

Both waited for orders, their eyes fixed on their master's face, as they saw him stand listening, and glancing his eye over the city, the harbor, and the road from the Plain du Nord. He saw afar signs of trouble, but he saw also that he was not too late. He looked down into the gardens of the Government-house. Was it possible that he would show himself there, heated, breathless, covered with dust as he was? No. He dismounted, and gave his horse to the trompettes, ordering them to go by the most public way to the hotel, Place Mont Archer, to give notice of the approach of his secretary and staff, and thence to the barracks, where he would appear when he had bathed.

The trompettes would have gone round five weary miles for the honor of carrying messages from the commander-in-chief through the principal streets of Cap. They departed with great zeal, while Toussaint ascended to the mountain pool to take the plunge, in which he found his best refreshment after a long ride. He was presently walking leisurely down the sloping field, through which he could drop into the grounds of the Government-house by a back gate, and have his interview with Hédonville before interruption came from the side of the town. As he entered the gardens, he looked to the wondering eyes he met there as if he had just risen from rest to enjoy a morning walk in the shrubberies. They were almost ready to understand, in its literal sense, the expression of his worshipers, that he rode at ease upon the clouds.

CHAPTER XIII.

AN OLD MAN IN NEW DAYS.

BEFORE the sun had touched the roofs of the town of Cap—while the streets lay cool and gray under the heights, which glowed in the flames of sunrise—most of the inhabitants were up and stirring. Euphrosyne Revel was at her grandfather's chamber-door; first listening for his call, and then softly looking in, to see whether he could still be sleeping. The door opened and shut by a spring, so that the old man did not hear the little girl as she entered, though his sleep was not sound. As Euphrosyne saw how restless he was, and heard him mutter, she thought she would rouse him; but she stayed her hand as she remembered that he might have slept ill, and might still settle for another quiet doze if left undisturbed. With a gentle hand she opened one of the jalousies, to let in more air; and she chose one which was shaded by a tree outside, that no glare of light might enter with the breeze.

What she saw from this window drew her irresistibly into the balcony. It was a tree belonging to the convent which waved before the window; and below lay the convent garden, fresh with the dews of the night. There stretched the green walks, so glittering with

diamond-drops and with the gossamer as to show that no step had passed over them since dawn. There lay the parterres—one crowded with geraniums of all hues; another with proud lilies, white, orange, and purple; and another with a flowering pomegranate in the centre, while the gigantic white and blue convolvulus covered the soil all around, mixing with the bright green leaves and crimson blossoms of the hibiscus. No one seemed to be abroad to enjoy the garden during this the freshest hour of the day; no one but the old black gardener Raphael, whose cracked voice might be heard at intervals from the depths of the shrubbery in the opposite corner, singing snatches of the hymns which the sisters sung in the chapel. When his hoarse music ceased, the occasional snap of a bough, and movements among the bushes, told that the old man was still there, busy at his work.

Euphrosyne wished that he would come out, within sight of the beckon of her hand. She dared not call for fear of waking her grandfather; but she very much wanted a flowering orange branch. A gay little humming-bird was flitting and hovering near her; and she thought that a bunch of fragrant blossoms would entice it in a moment. The little creature came and went, flew round the balcony and retired; and still old Raphael kept out of sight behind the leafy screen.

"It will be gone, pretty creature!" said Euphrosyne to herself; "and all for want of a single bough from all those thickets."

A thought struck her. Her morning frock was tied round the waist with a cord, having tassels which hung down nearly to her feet. She took off the cord, made a noose in it, and let it down among the shrubs below, swinging the end this way and that, as she thought best for catching some stray twig. She pursued her aim for a time, sending showers of dew-drops pattering down, and knocking off a good many blossoms, but catching nothing. She was so busy that she did not see that a gray-suited nun had come out, with a wicker cage in her hand, and was watching her proceedings.

"What are you doing, my child?" asked the nun, approaching, as a new shower of dew-drops and blossoms were shaken abroad. "If you desire to fish, I doubt not our reverend mother will make you welcome to our pond yonder."

"Oh, Sister Christine! I am glad you are come out," said Euphrosyne, bending over the balcony, and speaking in a low, though eager voice. "Do give me a branch of something sweet—orange, or citron, or something. This humming-bird will be gone if we do not make haste. Hush! Do not call. Grandpapa is not awake yet. Please make haste."

Sister Christine was not wont to make haste; but she did her best to gratify Euphrosyne. She went straight to the corner of the shrubbery where the abbess's mocking-bird spent all its summer days, lung up the cage, and

brought back what Euphrosyne had asked. The branch was drawn up in the noose of the cord, and the nun could not but stand and watch the event.

The bough was stuck between two of the bars of the *jalousie*, and the girl withdrew to the end of the balcony. The humming-bird appeared, hovered round, and at last inserted its long beak in a blossom, sustaining itself the while on its quivering wings. Before proceeding to another blossom, it flew away. Euphrosyne cast a smile down to the nun, and placed herself against the *jalousie*, holding the branch upon her head. As she had hoped, two humming-birds returned. After some hesitation, they came for more of their sweet food, and Euphrosyne felt that her hair was blown about on her forehead by the motion of their busy wings. She desired, above every thing, to keep still; but this strong desire, and the sight of Sister Christine's grave face turned so eagerly upward, made her laugh so as to shake the twigs very fearfully. Keeping her hand with the branch steady, she withdrew her head from beneath, and then stole slowly and cautiously backward within the window—the birds following. She now heard her grandfather's voice calling feebly and fretfully. She half turned to make a signal for silence, which the old man so far observed as to sink his complaints to a mutter. The girl put the branch into a water-jar near the window, and then stepped lightly to the bed.

"What is all this nonsense?" said M. Revel. "Why did not you come the moment I called?"

"Here I am, grandpapa: and do look—look at my humming-birds!"

"Humming-birds—nonsense! I called you twice."

Yet the old gentleman rubbed his eyes, which did not seem yet quite awake. He rubbed his eyes, and looked through the shaded room, as if to see Euphrosyne's new plaything. She brought him his spectacles from the toilet, helped to raise him up, threw a shawl over his shoulders, and placed his pillows at his back. Perceiving that he still could not see very distinctly, she opened another blind, so as to let one level ray of sunshine fall upon the water-jar, and the little radiant creatures that were hovering about it.

"There! there!" cried M. Revel, in a pleased tone.

"Now I will go and bring you your coffee," said Euphrosyne.

"Stop, stop, child! Why are you in such a hurry? I want to know what is the matter. Such a night as I have had!"

"A bad night, grandpapa? I am sorry."

"Bad enough! How came my light to go out? And what is all this commotion in the streets?"

Euphrosyne went to the night-lamp, and found that a very large flying beetle had disabled itself by breaking the glass and putting

out the light. There it lay dead—a proof, at least, that there were no ants in the room.

"Silly thing!" said Euphrosyne. "I do wish these beetles would learn to fly properly. He must have startled you, grandpapa. Did not you think it was a thief, when you were left in the dark?"

"It is very odd that nobody about me can find me a lamp that will serve me. And then, what is all this bustle in the town? Tell me at once what is the matter."

"I know of nothing the matter. The *trompettes* have been by this morning; and they say that the commander-in-chief is here; so there will be nothing the matter. There was some talk last night, Pierre said—some fright about to-day. But *L'Ouverture* is come; and it will be all right now, you know."

"You know nothing about it, child—teasing one with your buzzing, worrying humming-birds! Go and get my coffee, and send Pierre to me."

"The birds will come with me, I dare say, if I go by the balcony. I will take them away."

"No, no. Don't lose time with them. Let them be. Go and send Pierre."

When Euphrosyne returned with the coffee, she found, as Pierre had found before her, M. Revel so engrossed in looking through his spectacles at the water-jar as to have forgotten what he had to ask and to say.

"You will find the bath ready whenever you want it, grandpapa," said Euphrosyne, as she placed the little tray before him: "and it is a sweet, airy morning."

"Ay, I must make haste up, and see what is to be done. It is not safe to lie and rest in one's bed in this part of the world." And he made haste to stir his coffee with his trembling hands.

"Oh, you have often said that—almost ever since I can remember; and here we are, quite safe still."

"Tell the truth, child. How dare you say that we have been safe ever since you remember?"

"I said 'almost,' grandpapa. I do not forget our being in the woods; about—but we will not talk of that now. That was all over a long time ago, and we have been very safe since. The great thing of all is, that there was no *L'Ouverture* then to take care of us. Now, you know, the commander-in-chief is always thinking how he can take the best care of us."

"No *L'Ouverture* then! One would think you did not know what and where Toussaint was then. Why, child, your father was master over a hundred such as he."

"Do you think they were like him? Surely, if they had been like him, they would not have treated us as they did. *Afra* says she does not believe any body like him ever lived."

"*Afra* is a pestilent little fool."

"Oh, grandpapa!"

"Well, well! She is a very good girl in her

way; but she talks about what she does not understand. She pretends to judge of governors of the colony, when her own father can not govern this town, and she never knew Blanchelande! Ah! if she had known Blanchelande, she would have seen a man who understood his business, and had spirit to keep up the dignity and honor of the colony. If that sort of rule had gone on till now, we should not have had the best houses in the island full of these black upstarts, nor a mulatto governor in this very town."

"And then I should not have had Afra for a friend, grandpapa."

"You would have been better without, child. I do not like to see you forever with a girl of her complexion, though she is the governor's daughter. There must be an end of it—there shall be an end of it. It is a good time now. There is a reason for it to-day. It is time you made friends of your own complexion, child; and into the convent you go this very day."

"Oh, grandpapa, you don't mean that those nuns are of my complexion! Poor pale creatures! I would not for the world look like them; and I certainly shall if you put me there. I had much rather look like Afra than like Sister Benoîte or Sister Cecile. Grandpapa! you would not like me to look like Sister Benoîte?"

"How do I know, child? I don't know one from another of them."

"No, indeed! and you would not know me by the time I had been there three months. How sorry you would be, grandpapa, when you asked for me next winter, to see all those yellow-faced women pass before you, and when the yellowest of all came, to have to say, 'Can this be my poor Euphrosyne?'"

M. Revel could not help laughing as he looked up at the girl through his spectacles. He pinched her cheek, and said that there was certainly more color there than was common in the West Indies; but that it must fade, in or out of the convent, by the time she was twenty; and she had better be in a place where she was safe. The convent was the only safe place.

"You have often said that before," replied she, "and the time has never come yet. And no more it will now. I shall go with Afra to the cacao-gathering at Le Zéphyr, as I did last year. Oh, that sweet, cool place in the *Mornes du Chaos*! How different from this great, ugly, square white convent, with nothing that looks cheerful, and nothing to be heard but teaching, teaching, and religion, religion, forever!"

"I advise you to make friends among the sisters, however, Euphrosyne; for there you will spend the next few years."

"I will not make friends with any thing but the poor mocking-bird. I have promised Afra not to love any body instead of her; but she will not be jealous of the poor bird. It and I will spend the whole day in the thicket, mocking and pining—pining and mocking. The sisters shall not get a word out of me—not one of them. I may speak to old Raphael now

and then, that I may not forget how to use my tongue; but I vow that poor bird shall be my only friend."

"We shall see that. We shall see how long a giddy child like you can keep her mocking-bird tone in the uproar that is coming upon us! What will you do, child, without me, when the people of this colony are cutting one another's throats over my grave? What will become of you when I am gone?"

"Dear grandpapa, before that comes the question, What will you do without me? What will become of you when I am gone into that dull place? You know very well, grandpapa, that you can not spare me."

The old man's frame was shaken with sobs. He put his thin hands before his face, and the tears trickled between his fingers. Euphrosyne caressed him, saying,

"There! I knew how it would be. I knew I should never leave you. I never will leave you. I will bring up your coffee every morning, and light your lamp every night, as long as you live."

As she happened to be looking toward the door, she saw it opening a little upon its noiseless hinges, and a hand which she knew to be Pierre's beckoning to her. Her grandfather did not see it. She withdrew herself from him with a sportive kiss, ordered him to rest for awhile, and think of nothing but her humming-birds, and carried the tray out of the room.

Pierre was there, waiting patiently with a note from Afra.

"I did not bring it in, mademoiselle," said he, "because I am sure there is something amiss. A soldier brought the note; and he says he has orders to stay for my master's commands."

Afra's note told what this meant. It was as follows:

"DEAREST EUPHROSYNE,—Do not be frightened. There is time if you come directly. There is no danger if you come to us. The cultivators are marching hither over the plain. It is with the whites that they are angry; so you had better make yourself secure with us. The soldier who brings this will escort M. Revel and you this little way through the streets: but you must lose no time. We are sorry to hurry your grandfather, but it can not be helped. Come, my dearest, to your

"AFRA RAYMOND."

Pierre saw his young lady's face turn as pale as any nun's as she glanced over this note.

"The carriage, Pierre! Have it to the door instantly."

"With your leave, mademoiselle, the soldier says no French carriages will be safe in the streets this morning."

"Oh mercy! A chair, then. Send for a chair this moment. The soldier will go for it—ask him as a favor. They will not dare to refuse one to a governor's guard. Then come

and dress your master, and do not look so grave, Pierre, before him."

Pierre went, and was met at the door by a servant with another note. It was—

"Do not come by the street, dearest Euphrosyne. The nuns will let you through their garden into our garden-alley if you can only get your grandfather over the balcony. My two messengers will help you; but they are much wanted: so make haste. A. R."

"Make the soldiers sling an arm-chair from the balcony, Pierre; and send one of them round into the convent garden to be ready to receive us there. The abbess will have the gate open to the Government-house alley. Then come and dress your master; and leave it to me to tell him every thing."

"Likely enough," muttered Pierre; "for I know nothing of what is in those notes myself."

"And I do not understand what it is all about," said Euphrosyne, as she returned to her grandfather.

He had fallen into a light doze, lulled by the motion and sound of the humming-birds. Euphrosyne kissed his forehead to rouse him, and then told him gayly that it was terribly late—he had no idea how late it was—he must get up directly. The bath! no, there must be no bath to-day. There was no time for it; or, at least, he must go a little ride first. A new sort of carriage was getting ready—

She now looked graver as Pierre entered. She said that while Pierre dressed him, she would put up some clothes for a short visit to the Government-house.

M. Revel being now alarmed, Euphrosyne admitted that some confusion in the streets was expected, and that the governor and Afra thought that their friends would be most quiet at the back of the Government-house.

To her consternation, M. Revel suddenly refused to stir a step from his own dwelling. He would not be deceived into putting himself and his child into the hands of any mulattoes upon earth—governors or others. Not one of his old friends, in Blanchelande's time, would have countenanced such an act; and he would not so betray his color and his child. He had rather die on his own threshold.

"You must do as you please about that, sir," said Pierre; "but for Mademoiselle Euphrosyne, I must say, that I think it is full early for her to die—and when she might be safe too!"

"Oh, grandpapa! I can not let you talk of our dying," cried Euphrosyne, her cheeks bathed in tears. "Indeed I will not die, nor shall you either. Besides, if that were all—"

The old man knew what was in her mind—that she was thinking of the woods. He sank down on his knees by the bedside, and prayed that the earth might gape and swallow them up; that the sea might rush in, and overflow the hollow where the city had been, before he

and his should fall into the hands of the cursed blacks.

"Grandpapa," said Euphrosyne, gravely, "if you pray such a prayer as that, do not pray aloud. I can not hear such a prayer as that." Struggling with her tears, she continued: "I know you are very much frightened, and I do not wonder that you are; but I do wish you would remember that we have very kind friends, who will protect us if we will only make haste and go to them. And as for their being of a different color—I do wonder that you can ask God to cause the earth to swallow us up, when you know (at least you have taught me so) we must meet people of all races before the throne of God. He has made of one blood all the nations of the earth, you know."

M. Revel shook his head impatiently, as if to show that she did not understand his feelings. She went on, however:

"If we so hate and distrust them at this moment here, how can we pray for death, so as to meet them at the next moment there? Oh, grandpapa! let us know them a little better first. Let us go to them now."

"Don't waste time so, child; you hinder my dressing."

He allowed himself to be dressed, and made no further opposition till he found himself at the balcony of the next room.

"Here is your new coach," said Euphrosyne, "and plenty of servants;" showing him how one of the soldiers and old Raphael stood below to receive the chair, and the abbess herself was in waiting in a distant walk, beside the wicket they were to pass through.

Of course, the old gentleman said he could never get down that way; and he said something about dying on his own threshold—this time, however, in a very low voice. But, in the midst of his opposition, Euphrosyne seated herself in the chair and was let down. When she could no longer hear his complaints, but was standing beckoning to him from the grass-plot below, he gave up all resistance, was let down with perfect ease, and carried in the chair, followed by all the white members of his household, through the gardens, and up the alley where Afra was awaiting them. There was a gray sister peeping from behind every blind as they crossed the garden, and trembling with the revived fears of that terrible night of ninety-one, when they had fled to the ships. It was some comfort to them to see old Raphael busy with rake and knife, repairing the damage done to the bed under the balcony, all trampled as it was. Each nun said to herself that Raphael seemed to have no fears but that the garden would go on as usual, whatever disturbance was abroad.

"Have you seen him?" asked Euphrosyne, eagerly, of her friend, the moment they met.

"Oh yes. You shall see him too, from my window, if they will but talk on till we get there. He and the commissary, and some of the commissary's officers, are in the rose-gar-

den under my window. Make haste, or they may be gone."

"We must see grandpapa settled first."

"Oh yes; but I am so afraid they may be gone! They have been pacing the alley between the rose-trees this hour nearly—talking and arguing all the time. I am sure they were arguing; for they stopped every now and then, and the commissary made such gestures! He looked so impatient and so vexed!"

"And did *he* look vexed too?"

"Not in the least angry, but severe. So quiet, so majestic he looked, as he listened to all they said! and when he answered them—oh, I would not, for all the island, have his eyes so set upon me!"

"Oh, dear, let us make haste, or they will be gone!" cried Euphrosyne.

While Euphrosyne was endeavoring to make her grandfather feel himself at home and comfortable in the apartment appointed for him by the governor, Afra ran to her window to see if the potentates of the island were still at their conference. The rose-garden was empty; and she came back sorrowfully to say so. As she entered the apartment of her guests, she heard M. Revel sending a message of compliments to the commissary, with a request of an audience of a few minutes. The servants gave as much intimation as they dared of the commissary being so particularly engaged that they had rather be excused carrying this message. The girls looked at one another, nodded agreement, and Euphrosyne spoke.

"Suppose, grandpapa, you ask to see the commander-in-chief. He never refuses any thing that is asked of him; and he can do every thing he wishes. I dare say he will come at once if you desire it, and if we do not detain him too long. If he had been once in this room with us, how safe we should feel!"

"Oh, if we could see him once in this room!" cried Afra.

"Do you suppose I will beg a favor of that ambitious black?" cried M. Revel. "Do you think I will crave an audience of a fellow who, for aught I know, may have driven his master's carriage to my door in the old days? No; if I can not see Hédouville, I will take my chance. Go, fellow! and carry my message," he cried to Pierre.

Pierre returned with the answer which might have been anticipated. The commissary was so engaged—there was so much bustle and confusion throughout his establishment, that no one of his people would deliver the message.

"That would not have been the answer if—" whispered Euphrosyne to her friend.

"Shall I venture? yes, I will—shall I? At least I will keep upon the watch," said Afra, as she withdrew.

She presently sent in, with the tray of fruit, a basket of flowers, which Euphrosyne occupied herself in dressing, exactly as she did at home, humming, the while, the airs her grandfather heard her sing every day. Her devices an-

swered very well. He presently occupied himself in pointing out, exactly as he always did, that there was too much green in this bouquet, and not enough in that.

CHAPTER XIV.

SPOILING SPORT.

NOTHING could exceed the astonishment of the commissary on seeing Toussaint this morning. Hédouville was amusing himself, before the sun was high, alternately with three or four of his officers, in duetting with a parrot, which had shown its gaudy plumage among the dark foliage of a tamarind-tree in the garden. At every pause in the bird's chatter, one of the gentlemen chattered in reply, and thus kept up the discord, to the great amusement of the party. Hédouville was just declaring that he had obtained the best answer—the loudest and most hideous, when he heard the swing of a gate, and, turning round, saw Toussaint entering from the barrack-yard.

"The ape!" exclaimed one of the officers, in a whisper.

"Who—who is it?" eagerly asked a naval captain, lately arrived.

"Who should it be but the black chief? No other of his race is fond enough of us to be forever thrusting himself upon us. He is confidently fond of the whites."

"We only ask him," said Delon, another officer, "to like us no better than we like him, and leave us to manage our business our own way."

"Say the word, commissary," whispered the first, "and he shall not go hence so easily as he came."

"I should beg pardon, commissary," said Toussaint, as he approached, "for presenting myself thus—for entering by a back way—if it were not necessary. The crisis requires that we should agree upon our plan of operations before we are seen in the streets. It is most important that we should appear to act in concert. It is the last chance for the public safety."

"Crisis! public safety! seen in the streets!" exclaimed Hédouville. "I assure you, general, I have no thoughts of going abroad till evening. It will be a scorching day. Is the crisis you speak of that of the heats?"

"No trifling, commissary! Gentlemen," said he, turning to the officers, who happened to be laughing, "no levity! The occasion is too serious for mirth or for loss of time. Shall we speak alone, commissary?"

"By no means," said Hédouville. "These gentlemen would not for the world miss hearing your news. Has a fresh insurrection been contrived already? or has any Frenchman forgotten himself, and kissed Psyche, or cuffed Agamemnon?"

"A new insurrection has been contrived, and

by you. The cultivators are marching over the plain; and in four hours the town will be sacked, if you, M. Hédonville, who have given the provocation, do not withdraw it. You must sign this proclamation. It is the opposite of your own, now waiting for publication. But you must sign and issue it, and that within this hour. I hear what you say, gentlemen. You say that I have raised the cultivators. I have not. There is not a negro in the plain who does not at this moment believe that I am in the south. I come to put them down; but I will not go out with the sword in one hand, if I do not carry justice in the other."

"What do you mean about justice, general? What injustice has been done?"

"Here is the draught of your proclamation—"

"How came you by that paper—by the particulars of my intention?" asked Hédonville. "My proclamation is yet locked up in my own desk."

"Its contents are nevertheless known throughout the colony. When a commissary lightly and incidentally (and, therefore, the more offensively) settles, without understanding them, the most important points of difference between two unreconciled races, the very winds stoop in their flight to snatch up the tidings, and drop them as they fly. See here! See how you pronounce on the terms of field-service—and here, on the partition of unclaimed estates—and here, on the claims of the emigrants! The blacks must be indeed as stupid as you hold them to be, if they did not spread the alarm that you are about to enslave them again."

"I protest I never dreamed of such a thing."

"I believe you. And that you did not so dream shows that you are blind to the effects of your own measures; that the cultivators of the plain understand your proceedings better than you do yourself. Here is the proclamation which must be issued."

And he offered a paper, which Hédonville took, but tore in pieces, trampling them under foot, and saying that he had never before been so insulted in his function.

"That is a childish act," observed Toussaint, as he looked down upon the fragments of the document. "And a useless one," he continued; "for my secretary is getting it printed off by this time."

"Are you going to dare to put my name to a proclamation I have not seen?"

"Certainly not. My name will suffice, if you compel me to dispense with yours. This proclamation grants—"

Hédonville here gave whispered directions to Delon, who hastened toward the house; and to another, who made for the barrack-yard.

"From every quarter," said Toussaint, "you will have confirmation of the news I brought. I will speak presently of what must be done. This proclamation," pointing to the torn paper, "grants an amnesty to all engaged in former

conflicts of race, and declares that there are no 'returned emigrants' in the island—that they are all considered native proprietors—that all now absent shall be welcome again, and shall be protected—that the blacks are free citizens, and will so remain; but that they shall continue for five years to till the estates on which they live for one-fourth of the produce."

"I do not see the grounds of your disgust with my proclamation," said Hédonville. "I think your anger absurd."

"I have no doubt you do. This proves, with a multitude of other circumstances, that you must go."

"Admirable! And leave the colony to your government?"

"Just so. If you ask the whites of the island, they will tell you, almost to a man, that I can govern the whites; while events daily show that you can not rule the blacks. While you have held the title of commissary, you know that you have ruled only by my permission—sometimes strengthened by my approbation—oftener spared by my forbearance. I am aware that these gentlemen are not of that opinion," he continued, his voice assuming the mildness which always distinguished it when he spoke of his personal injuries. "They believe that if two or three brigands could be got to seize in his camp the ape with the Madras on his head, all would be well. But they are mistaken. They may play the brigand, and seize me now; but then the town will be burning before night."

"You should not believe all the saucy things that are told you—you should not care for the impertinence of young soldiers," said Hédonville, who suspected that his affairs were really in a critical state, and had now resumed his usual smoothness of manner. He led the way up the alley between the rose-trees, that the torn proclamation might be no longer in sight.

"No doubt," observed an officer, gravely, "the commissary will report to the First Consul (if you really persist in sending the commissary away)—he will doubtless report to the First Consul the prodigious power you hold here, and how great a rival Bonaparte has on this side the water."

"And how willing a servant," added Toussaint; "how willing to bear the burden of government for the good of France."

"Burden!" exclaimed all.

"Yes," replied Toussaint: "where is there a heavier burden? Do you suppose that men choose their own office in life? If so, should I have chosen such an one as mine? Was the pleasure of Heaven ever more clearly revealed than in my case? Ask the First Consul whether it was possible for me to be other than I am. The revolution of St. Domingo proceeded without any interference from me—a negro slave. I saw that the dominion of the whites could not last, divided as they were among themselves, and lost in the numbers of their foes. I was glad that I was a black. The time came

when I was compelled to act. I associated myself with the Spaniards, who were the allies of my king, and who had extended protection to the loyal troops of my color. But this protection served no end. The republic proclaimed the general liberty of the blacks. An unerring voice told me that my allegiance was thenceforward due to the republic. The blacks in their new condition wanted a leader. They chose me to lead them—to be the chief predicted by Raynal, as General Laveaux declared. Inspired by this call, I entered into the service of France. The services that I have rendered prove that it was indeed the voice of God that called me. Why do I tell you this? Because I owe an account of my life to you? No, indeed! I tell you all this that you may render my account to the First Consul, whom, it appears, I can not reach by letter. I charge you, by your fidelity to the mother-country, to repeat to Bonaparte what I have said."

"You could do it more accurately and forcibly yourself," observed Hédouville. "Let me advise that you go instead of me."

"You know," replied Toussaint, "who it was that said that I am the Bonaparte of St. Domingo, and that the colony could not exist without me. It was our brother functionaries who said it; and never did they say any thing more true."

The naval captain, Meronet, observed that his ship, now in the roads, happened to be that which had conveyed the commissary; and that it would greatly flatter him, after having brought out Commissary Hédouville, to carry back General Toussaint L'Ouverture.

"Your ship, sir," replied Toussaint, "will not contain a man like me—a man laden with the destinies of a race."

"But you speak of the burden of your office," observed one of the aids. "It must be great; and all men need occasional repose. Suppose you retire to France for an interval of repose?"

"Perhaps I may," replied Toussaint, "when this shrub," pointing to the sucker of a logwood-tree, "shall be large enough to make a ship to take me there."

"You could devolve your cares upon your friend Raymond, general, if you do not wish fully to trust the whites. Be persuaded to visit your brother in destiny and in glory, as you call Bonaparte."

"Raymond is my friend, as you say, and a good man; but he is not called to be arbiter of the fate of the colony. See! here are your messengers, commissary."

The officers entered from the barracks, with news that the plain was really in a state of commotion, and that no adequate defenses appeared to be provided by the authorities of the town.

"I charge myself with the defense of the town," said Toussaint. "Your part, commissary, is to sign the new proclamation instantly, and to prepare to sail for France, with as many

persons as desire to accompany you. On your promise to do this, I will guaranty the public peace. In this case you incur no further dishonor than that of not understanding the temper and the affairs of the blacks. If you refuse to go, I shall arrest you here, and denounce you to the Government of France as the cause of the insurrection which will undoubtedly ensue. You will not choose to incur this infamy. Therefore," he continued, turning to Captain Meronet, "you will have the goodness to return to your ship, and prepare it for the reception of the commissary. He will probably join you in the course of this day."

Again addressing the astonished functionary, he continued,

"You shall be protected to the latest possible moment, for the convenience of making your arrangements. When I can protect you no longer, I will cause the alarm-gun on the height behind the barracks to be fired. At that signal you will hasten to the boats and be gone. Assure yourself of my justice, and render me an equal measure at the Court of France. Farewell!"

As he entered the Government-house, the officers looked at each other in consternation.

"What is to be done?" asked more than one.

"It is true enough," said Hédouville, "that neither I nor any one else understands these people. The danger is really pressing, Delon?"

"Most pressing, there is no doubt."

"Then I have done with this mongrel colony—and I am not sorry. At home, I shall find means to vindicate my honor."

"You mean to depart, then, commissary?"

"When we hear the alarm-gun. Not sooner. It is possible that it may be a mere threat."

"If so, it will be the first mere threat in which this black has been detected."

"That is true. He usually acts first and speaks afterward. Gentlemen, we shall have to go. I must first see about this proclamation, and discover whether any thing else can be done. If not, captain, au revoir!"

CHAPTER XV.

GO OR STAY?

THE commander-in-chief was not long closeted with Governor Raymond: for this was a day when minutes were precious. It was observed that there was a sudden activity among the messengers of the governor, among the soldiers, and among the citizens; and every one felt that the voice of Toussaint was giving orders in every corner of the town before he had yet come forth. The report spread that Moysse L'Ouverture was come; and he was soon seen, superintending the placing of cannon in the streets, and the mustering of soldiers in the squares. The presence of the young man in-

spired an enthusiasm inferior only to that which waited on the steps of his uncle. Its influence on Moyses was seen in the fire of his eye, the quickness of his movements, and the hilarity of his air. He appeared to notice every one who cheered, or waved hat or handkerchief to him, and to overhear all that was said as he passed along. In one instance he stopped to reply.

"I little thought," he heard an old negro merchant say to a neighbor, "I little thought ever to see an *Ouverture* planting cannon against his own color."

"Nor do you see it now, friend," said Moyses. "The insurgents in the plain are of all colors; almost as many whites as blacks are discontented with the commissary, and—"

"Turn your guns upon the commissary, then, young soldier!"

"There is no need, friend. We shall be rid of the commissary by an easier method; and these guns will be wheeled home as harmless as they came. My belief is, that not a drop of negro blood will be shed; and to that end do we plant our cannon. If we tranquilize the whites of the town, and empty the Government-house of the French, the negroes of the plain will find none but friends when they arrive."

"Oh, ay! That is your policy, is it?"

"That is *L'Ouverture's* policy. Tell it everywhere. He is the best friend of the blacks who best makes it known."

The explanation passed from mouth to mouth; and the new proclamation, signed by Toussaint and Hédoüville, from hand to hand. The proclamation was posted in the corners of the streets; it was read aloud in the squares; it was sent, by messengers of every color, among the insurgents in the plain. The effect of this, connected with the report, which every moment gained strength, that the commissary was about to quit the colony, was so evident, that Toussaint's wishes seemed likely to be accomplished. The insurgents did not, indeed, disband: they had been too often deceived by the commissary's bland promises to do that before they had gained their point: but there was every reason to believe that they would march upon the town only to secure the departure of Hédoüville and his adherents, and the fidelity of the Government to the terms of the proclamation.

When Toussaint came forth from his conference with Raymond, Afra and Euphrosyne were awaiting him in the corridor. He would have passed them with a smile; but he saw that Afra was urging Euphrosyne to speak, and that the blushing Euphrosyne dared not do so. He therefore stopped to tell Afra that his daughters had sent their love to her; that she was going to Pongaudin in a day or two; and that her friends there would be very glad to see her.

"Am I really going? Does my father say that I may?"

"He is going too: he will be there before you."

"My poor Euphrosyne, what will you do?" exclaimed Afra. "This is Euphrosyne Revel," she continued, to Toussaint; "and—"

"Revel!" he said. "Have not you an aged relative in this town, my dear?"

"In that room," hastily answered Afra. "He is very old, and much alarmed to-day; and he can not believe that he and Euphrosyne are safe even here. If you will only assure Euphrosyne that there is no danger—if she could tell him that you say so—"

"I will tell him myself," said Toussaint. "He is in that apartment, you say?"

"Oh! but, please your excellency," exclaimed Afra, "he may not like—he may not wish . . . Euphrosyne is as much devoted to you as we are; but—"

Toussaint was well aware that M. Revel might not like, would not wish, to see him or any black. Among all the hatreds which had deformed the colony, none more fierce had existed than that between M. Revel and the negro race. He had been a cruel master; hence his incessant terrors now. He had been marked out for vengeance at the time of the revolution, and his family had perished for his crimes; and hence the detestation in which, as the survivor of these victims, he was regarded by most who knew the story. Euphrosyne knew nothing of it, nor did her young companion. There was no one to tell them uselessly so painful a tale; and there was nothing in M. Revel's present conduct to awaken a suspicion of the truth. He rarely saw a black; and the tenderness which lies in some corner of the hardest hearts was by him lavished upon his only remaining descendant. Little did she suppose now how much better her grandfather was known by Toussaint than by herself.

"Trust me!" said Toussaint, smiling. "I will not annoy M. Revel. I will merely re-assure him, and tell him a little good news, and then leave him to his repose."

"Yes, Afra," interposed Euphrosyne. "Oh, yes, please your excellency, do go! I will tell him you are coming."

She flew along the corridor, and, with joyous smiles, prepared M. Revel for some great honor and pleasure, when Toussaint entered, and bowed low, as it had ever been his custom to do before gray hairs.

"I come," said he to the old man, who seemed at a loss whether to rise or not, but who would not ask his visitor to sit down—"I come to encourage you to dismiss all fears. By the resolution of the commissary to sail for France this day, all further disputes are obviated. We have strong hopes that peace will not be disturbed."

"The commissary going home! Who, then, is to govern us? What is to become of the whites in the colony?"

"I will take care of them. Those who are unwilling to remain, in the absence of the commissary, can depart with him. There is shipping enough for more than will wish to go."

Euphrosyne glanced apprehensively at her grandfather, and then said,

"Grandpapa is too old to go upon the sea any more; and I am not afraid of any thing here. I do not believe there is any thing to be afraid of here; is there?"

"Indeed I believe not."

"Besides," said Afra, "my father will not allow any harm to happen to his best friends. My father—"

"Your father, my dear, will not be here," said Toussaint. "He is appointed to the Legislature in the interior. I protect this town till a new governor is appointed. We told you we hoped to see you at Pongaudin. You will pass your time there with my family, while M. Raymond attends his duties in the Legislature. I go, sir, to provide for the peace of the town. If I can be of service to you, you have only to send to me. I entreat you to rely upon my protection."

And he went out.

"Oh, grandpapa!" exclaimed Euphrosyne, sighing.

"My dears, I hope I was not rude to him. I know that he meant kindly by coming; and I would not be otherwise than civil. I hope I was not rude to the commander-in-chief."

Neither of his companions spoke to give him comfort on this head. He grew angry. He declared that he did not understand all these changes and troubles, and would go out of the way of them. He would sail with Hédouville, and so should Euphrosyne, and so should Pierre. He knew he should die before they had been a week at sea; but he would not stay to see every thing turned topsy-turvy by the blacks.

Afra gently said that she understood it was Hédouville who had endeavored to turn every thing topsy-turvy, and those who understood the affairs of the colony better who hoped to keep them straight. Euphrosyne protested that it was impossible to get home to pack up their goods; and, even if they were at home, there was no time to do it properly. When she found all her objections of this class unavailing, she gravely said that she fully believed what her grandfather had just declared—that he would die before they had been a week at sea; and nothing, therefore, should make her consent to go. A compromise was at length agreed upon. Euphrosyne promised to enter the convent if her grandfather should desire it; and on this promise he consented to say no more about going to sea.

As Toussaint went forth from M. Revel's apartment, he met M. Pascal with his port-folio in his hand.

"M. Pascal here already! I am gratified—I am grateful!" said Toussaint, grasping his hand. "You are weary—you must be very weary; but can you work a little before going to rest?"

"Willingly. No doubt. Most willingly."

Toussaint desired that fruit and wine should be sent to the governor's private room, and that

the reports of messengers from the city should be brought instantly to him there. M. Pascal and he then sat down beside a table, with pen, ink, and paper before them.

"M. Pascal," Toussaint began, "the commissary sails for France this day, with as many as desire to accompany him. You know the reasons which compel me to advise his departure. You came out as his secretary. Do you desire to return with him?"

"I do not. With your permission, I will remain with you."

"With what view?"

"My own satisfaction, and the wish to serve the colony. My attachment to yourself is strong. I also perceive that you govern wisely and well; and I desire to aid in so important a work."

"Good. But you are not aware of the danger of attaching yourself thus exclusively to me. Till to-day, if I fell, your way to France, your way in France was open. After to-day it will no longer be so. I am so surrounded with dangers that I can scarcely escape ruin or death. The mulattoes conspire against my power and my life. The blacks for whom I have made myself responsible are yet full of passion, and not to be relied on in the present infancy of their education. The French officials are so many malignant spies—excepting yourself, indeed," he added, with a smile. "Bonaparte, who rules everywhere, is surrounded by our emigrants, who attribute their sufferings to the blacks; and he is jealous of me. I would rather say he distrusts me. Now you see my position. I ask no white to share its perils. If you go with Hédouville, you shall carry with you my friendly farewell."

"I will stay with you."

"Thank God! Then we are friends indeed! Now to business. In the pressing affairs of to-day, we must not overlook the future security of the colony. The story which Hédouville will tell at home must be met and illustrated by our statement. Write so fully to the First Consul as that he may clearly see that it is to Hédouville's ignorance and presumption that the present disturbances are owing."

"It is a clear case."

"It is to us. Make it so to him. One word first. Will you undertake the office of governor of this town?"

"Instead of Raymond?"

"Instead of Raymond. He is a good man, but I erred in appointing him. He is fit for deliberation, but not for action. But for my early arrival, this town would have been burned to-day for want of even a show of defense. He is setting out now for the Legislature, to which I have appointed him, and where he will be valuable. Will you assume his office?"

"By no means. I desire to remain beside you, and study your mode of government before I attempt myself to govern."

"I have no fixed mode of governing. I merely act as seems to me good at the time."

"Inspired by a generous love ever," said Pascal.

"Enough of this. It would be an advantage to me and to the colony that you should undertake this office. There is no other white, there is no mulatto fit for it, and the mulattoes need conciliation. If they see the office bestowed on a black, or occupied by me in the interim, they will feel themselves injured by Raymond's removal. You see the advantages of your filling the office."

"I see yet more plainly the disadvantages, unfit as I am. I can not accept it."

"Very well. While you are writing, I will ascertain how the provisioning of the ships goes on, and will give you as much time as possible. But there is not a moment to lose. I will return presently to sign."

Toussaint walked up and down the corridor, receiving reports and issuing orders every moment. He found that the harbor was covered with boats, carrying out hogs, fowls, vegetables, and water, according to his orders; but no baggage had been sent down from the quarters of the French officials, though porters had been waiting for two hours past. Scouts had come in with news of the approach of the insurgents. This information was communicated to Hédouville, with a hint that the ships were nearly provisioned; but no answer was returned. Moysé sent word that the preparations in the town were nearly complete, and the spirit of the inhabitants improving every hour, if only the commissary would make haste and be gone. Toussaint found the moment was coming for him to give the word to fire the alarm-gun.

"Are the dispatches nearly ready?" he asked of Pascal, entering the secretary's apartment.

"Quite ready for signature," replied Pascal, drying the ink of the last sheet.

"Excellent!" cried Toussaint, when he had read them. "True and clear!"

He signed and sealed them, and introduced the officer who was to be responsible for their delivery, assuring him that he would be welcome back to the honors which would follow the faithful discharge of his trust. He did not forget to request M. Pascal to go to rest. There might be no rest for either of them this night.

As Euphrosyne sat beside M. Revel, who was sleeping on a couch after the fatigues of the morning, old Pierre beckoned her softly out, sending in Euphrosyne's maid, and saying, as he shut the door,

"She will stay with my master till he wakes. Mademoiselle Afra has sent for you, mademoiselle, to see from the upper gallery what is going on. The harbor is so crowded with boats that they can hardly move; and it is time they were moving pretty fast, for the battle is beginning at the other end of the town, and the commissary is not off yet, though the gun was fired half an hour since. You heard the gun, mademoiselle?"

"Yes. I am glad it was only a signal. You are sure it was only a signal?"

"So they say everywhere. This is the way, mademoiselle. M. Pascal is up here—the secretary, you know—and Mademoiselle Raymond, and her gouvernante, and several more, who have nothing to do with the fighting."

"But I do not want to see any fighting," said Euphrosyne, turning upon the stairs to descend. "Tell Mademoiselle Raymond that I can not bear to see the fighting."

"There is no fighting yet, mademoiselle, indeed; and many say there will not be any. Indeed you must see such a fine sight as this. You can see the commander-in-chief galloping about the square, with his two trompettes at his heels."

Euphrosyne turned again, and ran up to the top without once stopping. There she was hastily introduced to M. Pascal, and placed by the gouvernante where she could see every thing.

By this time it had become a question whether the commissary and his suite could get away. They were making every effort to do so; but it was clear that their road would have been blockaded if the commander-in-chief and his trompettes had not ridden round and round the party of soldiers which escorted them, clearing a passage by the power of a voice and a presence which always prevailed. Meantime, a huge body of people, which filled all the streets in the northern quarter, was gaining ground, pressing forward against the peaceable opposition of the towns-people and the soldiers commanded by Moysé. The clamor of voices from that quarter was prodigious, but there were no shots. The wharves were covered with gentlemen, ladies, children, servants, and baggage, all being precipitated by degrees into boats, and rowed away, while more were perpetually arriving.

"Is not this admirable?" said M. Pascal. "The secret has actually been kept that the commissary is on his way to the water-side. See! the cultivators are pressing on in this direction. They think he is here. If they knew where he was, they might catch him. As it is, I believe he will escape."

"Oh, are they coming here? Oh, my poor grandfather!" cried Euphrosyne, turning very pale.

"Fear nothing," said Afra. "They will presently learn that there is nothing to come here for. Will they not, M. Pascal?"

"No doubt, and if not, there is nothing to fear, I believe. Not a shot has been fired yet but from the alarm-gun."

"Oh, how it echoed from the Haut-du-Cap!" cried Afra. "I wonder what the cultivators understood by it. See! my father's barge! There is fighting there, surely."

As Hédouville and his suite approached the wharf, the governor's barge, which had lain at a little distance from the shore, began to press in, among the crowd of other boats, at a signal from one of the trompettes. The other boats, which were taking in terrified women and children, resisted this movement, and refused, at

such a moment, its usual precedence to the governor's barge. There was a hustling, a struggling, a shrieking, an uproar, so loud as to reach the ears and understandings of the insurgents. The word spread that the commissary was escaping them. They broke through their opponents, and began a rush to the wharves. Not a few shots were now fired; but the young ladies scarcely heeded them in the excitement of this decisive moment.

"Oh, they will seize him! They will tear him in pieces!" cried Afra.

"He can not—no, he never can get away!" exclaimed Euphrosyne.

"And he gave me the sweetest smile as he was going out!" said the weeping gouvernante.

"There! Bravo! Bravo!" cried M. Pascal; and Pierre echoed "Bravo!"

"What is it? What is it?" cried the girls.

"He is safe! He and his party—they are all safe! Not in the barge; that is upset. You see those two green boats now pulling off. They are there. They leaped into those boats just in time."

"Oh, look, look! what dreadful confusion!" cried Euphrosyne, covering her eyes with her hands.

"It is not so sure that they are safe yet," observed Pierre. "See how the blacks are pouring into the water!"

"And carrying the ladies and children with them, I fear," said M. Pascal, gazing anxiously through his glass.

In fact, the negroes had no idea of giving up the pursuit because they had reached the water. Hundreds plunged in; and their heads were seen bobbing about all the surface of the bay. The rowers, however, pulled well, and presently left the greater number behind, to find satisfaction in the coolness of the element.

"There is no great harm done," said M. Pascal, still gazing through his glass. "They have picked up two ladies and three children; and none seem to be missing."

"It is well that you and monsieur were not there, Euphrosyne," observed Afra.

Euphrosyne shuddered, and Pierre looked all amazement at the absurdity of such an idea.

"No fear for us, mademoiselle," said he. "See how empty the streets are down below. None but the guard left within half a mile."

It did indeed appear as if the whole population of the town and plain was collected on the shores of the bay. Those who had thrown themselves into the sea had to wait for a footing on land, unless they chose to swim round the point, which some of them did. When at length the crowd began to move up into the town, it was because the commander-in-chief was riding away, after having addressed the people.

"What have you been about, child?" exclaimed M. Revel, an hour after. "You are never beside me when I wake."

Euphrosyne did not point out that this was

the first time she had failed to watch his siesta. She said that she had been seeing the commissary set sail.

"What, already? He is in a great hurry, I think."

"The wind is quite fair, grandpapa. I suppose that is the reason why he made all the ships in the harbor sail the same way. He has carried off three frigates, and all the shipping in the roads. The sea is quite clear, grandpapa. There is not a single sail in sight, all along, as far as you can see. They are all off for France."

"What in the world made him do that?"

"Perhaps we shall hear some day. To be sure, he had to carry a good many people away with him."

"Did many whites go with him?"

"I do not know how many whites. They say fifteen hundred went altogether; but many of these were mulattoes; and some few blacks, who went for a frolic, and will come back again when they have seen France."

"Strange doings! Strange doings!" sighed the old man.

"And we shall have some glorious doings to-morrow, grandpapa. There was a little bustle and struggle when the commissary went away; I am glad you were asleep, and did not hear it. There will be no more—there will be no riot now, every body says—the commander-in-chief has behaved so finely, and the people are so fond of him. The danger is all over; and the towns-people have begged him—the Deliverer, as they call him—to attend the great church to-morrow in state. Te Deum will be sung in all the churches, and it is to be a great fête-day. Are you not pleased?"

"Not at all pleased that Hédouville is gone, and fifteen hundred of his friends, and all the shipping."

"Well, but we are all at peace now, and every body satisfied."

"Why are we here, then? Why am I not at home?"

"We will go home in a day or two. The streets will be noisy to-night; and, besides, one removal is enough for one day. Afra will follow her father after to-morrow; he is gone, you know, this morning—"

"Whose guest am I, then? If I am the guest of the negro Toussaint—"

"You are the guest of M. Raymond while Afra is here. When she sets out, we will go home."

"And shall I have to be swung up to the balcony, and have my brains dashed out, while all the nuns are staring at me?"

"Oh no," replied Euphrosyne, laughing. "There will be nothing then to prevent your going in your own carriage to your own door. I am afraid we shall not find my pretty little humming-birds there. They will think I have forgotten them."

"Ay, those humming-birds," said M. Revel, appearing to forget all his troubles.

CHAPTER XVI.

DREAMING AWAKE.

THOUGH the peace of the town was considered secure, there was little less bustle throughout the day and night than there had been in the morning. The cultivators were all gone home. They poured out of the town almost as fast as they had poured into it, happy to have attained their object in the defeat of the French authorities, and to be returning without the loss or punishment of a man. As they attained the height behind which they would lose sight of the sea, they turned for one more view of the empty bay, and of the fleet, now disappearing on the horizon. They gave three cheers; and this was the last that was heard of them, except by such as met them in the plain, where they sang, as they walked, the words of their chief's proclamation. In negro fashion, they had set it to music; and very well it sounded when sung from the heart.

In the town, the soldiers were busy removing the guns and all signs of warfare, and the inhabitants in preparing for the fête of to-morrow. During the night, the hurry of footsteps never ceased—so many of the citizens were going out into the country, and returning with blossoming shrubs to adorn the churches, and flowers with which to strew the path of the Deliverer. Under cover of these zealous preparations did discontent, like a serpent under the blossoms of the meadow, prepare to fix its poisonous tooth. There were men abroad in the streets who looked upon these preparations for rejoicing with a determination that the rejoicings should never take place.

The business of his arduous day being finished, Toussaint had retired early to rest, in a chamber in the south wing of the Government-house—the part which had been inhabited by the French functionaries. He would allow no one to occupy any apartments of the north wing (that which was appropriated to the governor of the town) while the daughter of the late governor and her guests remained there. His secretary, who had taken some hours' rest before, was busy writing, after midnight, in an apartment in the same wing. He was preparing dispatches for the Central Assembly, now sitting in the interior.

M. Pascal was far from being on good terms with himself this night. If in the morning he had doubted his capacity for being governor of the town, he this night doubted his qualifications for the office of secretary, which he had thus far filled to his own satisfaction. To-night he could not command his ideas—he could not fix his attention. He wrote a paragraph, and then he dreamed; he planned a proposition, and then he forgot it again; and, in despair, started up to pace the floor, and disperse intrusive thoughts by exercise. These thoughts would intrude again, however; and he found himself listlessly watching through the window a waving tree-top, or a sinking star, while his pen dried in his hand.

These intrusive ideas were of Afra. He had never thought of love, in regard to himself, even enough to despise it or to resolve against it; and the time was apparently come when Love was to revenge himself for this neglect. Perhaps it was this idea, as much as the attractions of Afra herself, that haunted him to-night. He felt that his hour was come; that he was henceforth, like other men, to be divided between two pursuits—to be dependent upon another for his tranquillity. He felt already that he could never again see Mademoiselle Raymond, or hear of her, without emotion. He had never understood love at first sight, and had hardly believed in it: he now did not understand it, but he could not but believe in it. He felt actually haunted. Every breath of air that whispered in the window brought her voice. Every thing that moved in the night-breeze made him start as if it was herself. At last, in despair about his task, which must be finished before dawn, he covered his eyes with his hands as he leaned back in his chair, resolving not to move till he had ascertained what it was that he wanted to write next.

A slight noise in the direction of the door, however, made him look up; and he saw advancing toward the light no other than Afra herself. It was no wonder that he sat upright in his chair, his pale face paler than usual. In another moment, however, he blushed to the temples on hearing a suppressed laugh from some one who stood behind Afra, and who said, after some vain attempts to speak for laughing, "M. Pascal takes us for ghosts."

"By no means, Mademoiselle Revel. Ghosts do not wrap themselves in shawls from the night air, I believe; nor come in at the door when the shorter way is through the wall; or take a seat when asked, as I hope you will do." And he placed chairs as he spoke.

"We might have frightened you dreadfully if we could have looked half as ghost-like as you did the first moment you saw us. Perhaps it was the lamp—"

"Hush! Euphrosyne," said Afra. "You speak too loud, and waste time. Remember what we came for. M. Pascal," she said, in a low voice, leaning toward him over the table, and refusing to sit down, "how is L'Ouverture guarded?"

"Not at all, I believe. Why?"

The girls made a gesture of terror. Both said, eagerly,

"He is in great danger; indeed, indeed he is."

"Where are the soldiers?" asked Euphrosyne. "Do send for them directly; and ask him to lock himself up in the safest place till they come."

"Tell me what you mean, and then—"

"I think he is in danger, now the white rulers are gone, from the people of my color," said Afra; "and, I fear, this very night."

"Do you mean that they intend to murder him?"

"Perhaps so. Perhaps to seize him and send him to Rigaud—and that will be only a slower murder."

"But how—"

"I will tell you. Euphrosyne and I sat rather late behind the jealousies, in the dark, to see the people bring in flowers and fruit from the country for the morning. I saw many mulattoes in the walk, but none of them had fruit or flowers. I watched them. I know their ways, their countenances, and their gestures. I saw they were gloomy and angry, and I found out that it is with L'Ouverture. They were plotting mischief, I am certain."

"But why so suddenly—why to-night?"

"So we thought at first; and we went to rest, intending to tell L'Ouverture to-morrow. But the more we thought and talked about it, the more uneasy we grew. We were afraid to go to sleep without telling some one in this wing: so we stole along the corridors in the dark, and saw that there was a light in this library, and ventured to look in, hoping it might be L'Ouverture himself."

"He is asleep, in a room near. I will waken him. You are not afraid to stay here a few moments while I am gone?"

"Oh no."

"He may wish to question you himself."

"Tell him," said Afra, speaking rapidly, "that the mulattoes are jealous of him, because they think he wants to have all the power in his own hands. They say, 'There go the ships! There are no whites in power now. So much the better! But here is Raymond displaced, and L'Ouverture is all in all. We shall have every office filled with blacks; and the only chance for our degraded color is in the field, or in the removal of this black.' Tell him this; but oh! be sure to tell him my father and I do not agree in one word of it."

"She would do any thing in the world to save him," said Euphrosyne.

"You are dear as a daughter to him," said M. Pascal, with eyes of love, as he left them.

"I wish I was sure of that," said Afra. "But what can be done, Euphrosyne? He has no guard! And my father is not here, nor any one to help us! I fancy every moment I hear them coming."

"I am not much afraid," said Euphrosyne, her teeth chattering all the while. "He is so powerful! He never seems to want any body to protect, scarcely to help him."

"But asleep! After midnight! Think of it! If they should seize him and bind him before he is awake!"

This fear was removed by his appearance, dressed, and like himself. He smiled at the girls, offered them each an arm, and said he had a sight to show them if they would look at it without speaking. He led them in the dark to a window, whence they looked down upon a court-yard, which was full of soldiers, awake and armed. In another moment Toussaint was

conducting them along the corridors toward their own apartments.

"You knew!" whispered Afra. "We need not have come. I believe you always know every thing."

"I suspected a plan to prevent the publishing of the amnesty to-morrow, and the filling up the offices of the colony with blacks. I suspected, but was not certain. Your intelligence has confirmed me."

"What will happen?" asked Euphrosyne, trembling. "Will any body be killed?"

"Not to-night, I trust. You may go to rest secure that no blood will be spilled to-night; and to-morrow, you know, is a holiday. If you hear a step in the corridor of this your wing, do not be alarmed. I am going to send one of my own guard."

He left them at their door, after standing to hear them fasten it inside.

The girls kept awake as long as they could, calling each other's attention to every fancied noise. They could be sure of nothing, however, but of the march of the sentinel along the corridor. They both slept at last, and were wakened in broad daylight by the gouvernante, who entered in great trepidation, to say that there had been a plot against the commander-in-chief; that the window of his chamber had been entered at two o'clock by a party of mulattoes, who had all been seized by L'Ouverture's soldiers. How it came to end so—how soldiers enough happened to be at hand at the right moment—how it was all done without fighting—without noise enough even to break her rest (and she always knew if any body stirred), the gouvernante could not tell. All she knew was, that L'Ouverture was the most considerate creature in the world. As soon as the eleven mulattoes who had been taken were put into confinement, L'Ouverture had sent one of his own guards into her corridor, to prevent her being alarmed for herself and her young charge.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE GIFT AT THE ALTAR.

POOR Euphrosyne! She was not allowed by her grandfather to go to church this day. M. Revel insisted upon it that it would be an act of treason for one of the French race to attend a thanksgiving for having got rid of the French authorities. In vain did Euphrosyne represent that the thanksgiving was for something very different—for the deliverance of the town and district from war—for the security of white and black inhabitants alike. Neither M. Revel nor Pierre would hear a word of this. They were quite sure that the faster the dark people thronged to the churches to rejoice, the more fervently should the whites mourn and pray for mercy at home. Her grandfather said Pierre should escort her to the chapel of the convent, where she might go without being

seen. That service was a fitting one for her to attend; and he would spare her for a couple of hours, to be so spent under the eye of the abbess. This, however, Euphrosyne declined. She preferred remaining to see from behind the blind what went on in the Jesuits' Walk—to see Afra and her gouvernante dressed for church—to see L'Ouverture set forth—to see the soldiers follow, marching in a compact body, each man carrying a green bough in token of rejoicing. She did not know, any more than the crowd that lined the way, that in the centre of this body of military, and concealed by their green boughs, were the eleven mulatto prisoners.

Afra entered quickly to say farewell; and, lifting her veil hastily, she said,

"Kiss me, and let me go. L'Ouverture says he shall take us into church himself, as my father is not here. Mademoiselle and I are going with Madame Ducie and her daughters, and L'Ouverture will wait for us at the church and lead us in. Poor Euphrosyne! I wish you were going!"

"I never cared for any thing half so much. Will you really walk all through the church to your seat on his arm? And I should have been on the other side if grandpapa would have let me go! Do not stay, dear. Tell me all about it when you come back."

"I must be gone. There will not be standing-room for one person to spare. You know every one of my color in Cap is ordered to be in the church as the hour strikes. Farewell."

Euphrosyne had thought she had heard the crier publish this order; and presently Pierre brought her the handbill to the same effect, which was passing from hand to hand. If Euphrosyne and Pierre speculated curiously on what this order might mean, what must have been the anxiety of the mulattoes? Most of them had known of the conspiracy of the day before; all had now heard of its failure. All were anxious to attend the church, as staying away would amount to a confession of disloyalty; but there was not one of them who did not go with fear and trembling, wishing that the day was over, though dreading what it might bring forth.

As Afra, and the ladies who attended her, drew near the great church, they found the streets absolutely empty. Loyalty, and the desire to appear loyal, had carried the entire population to the churches, and the houses appeared deserted by all but an aged or sick person here and there, who looked forth upon the activity he could not share. In the centre of the area before the church were piled the arms of the garrison and of Toussaint's troops, and on the top of the pile of arms lay the fetters which had just been removed from the mulatto conspirators. L'Ouverture, in giving his orders to this effect, had said that arms should be laid aside in the act of thanksgiving for peace, and bonds while giving thanks for liberty. When at length he gave the signal for the military to

enter the church after him, some of the officers looked earnestly to him for orders that a guard might be left with the arms. He understood their thoughts, and replied, with a smile,

"Let every one enter to worship; the arms are safe. There is no one near who would employ them against us."

Afra's heart beat, and she did not forget Euphrosyne as she was led to her seat by L'Ouverture, at whose entrance there was a half-suppressed murmur throughout the vast congregation—a murmur which sank into silence at the first breathing of solemn music from the choir. The signs of gratulation for the escape of the Deliverer, first heard in the streets, and now witnessed amidst the worshipping crowd, were too much for the self-command of the conspirators. Their attitude became every moment more downcast—their countenances more sullen and wretched. They had a strong impression that their execution was to seal the thanksgivings of this day; and in every allusion to deliverance from danger, privy conspiracy, and rebellion, they believed that they read their own doom. A tempting idea of escape now and then crossed the imagination of one or other of them. As they sat with their heads upon their breasts, the thought that they were unfettered, and their guards unarmed, made them eager to glance around, and see if there was hope; but, whenever they raised their eyes, and whichever way they looked, they encountered eyes seemingly as numerous as the stars of heaven—as many, as penetrating, but not so calm. Eyes which shone with love of L'Ouverture could not look benignly on those who would have kidnapped or murdered him. Nor did the eleven meet with any visible sympathy from the multitude of their own color who were present. The greater number looked studiously another way, in order to appear to have no connection with them; and the countenances which were turned toward them wore a strong expression of displeasure, as toward men who had ruined the last hopes of a cause. The wretched men gave themselves up at length to counting the minutes till the service should be over, and they should be once more retired from this myriad of eyes, when they were roused by a singular suspension of the service.

After the prayer for Divine pardon, ensuing upon mutual forgiveness, L'Ouverture arose from his knees, stepped from his place, and stood before the altar. He spoke, while all rose to hear.

"In this place," said he, "brethren should be reconciled, or their offering of thanksgiving will not be pure. Will all who feel enmity toward me come to this holy spot and exchange forgiveness?"

He looked toward the conspirators, who gazed upon him with eager eyes, but did not move. They could not believe that this appeal was intended for them till he beckoned to them. They advanced with hesitating steps—first one or two—then several—then all; and, as they

drew nearer, they rushed upon him, some kissing his hand, others kneeling and embracing his knees. Bidding these arise, he said gently, but in a voice so penetrating that it was heard in the farthest recess of the building,

"I must have offended you, since you have conspired against me; and you are very guilty toward me and your country. May He who looks down with pity on the shameful strifes of men, bear witness to our hearty forgiveness of each other! Can you with truth say Amen? If not yet with truth, say it not till you have heard me."

"Amen!" they cried, with a cry which was echoed first from the roof of the church, and then by every voice beneath it which was not choked with sobs.

"If you had had patience with me," said Toussaint, "you would have found that I am above partiality in regard to race. When I find men of your color fit for office, they shall be promoted to office, as my friend Raymond was. I entreat you henceforth to give me time; to watch me, though closely, generously; and, if I fail to satisfy you, to make your complaints to myself. As for the past, let it be forgotten by all. Go to your homes; and I trust no one will speak to you of this day. As for myself, I must go where I am wanted. It may be that I shall have to punish the leader of your color, if he persists in disturbing the peace of the colony. But fear not that, if you do not share in his offenses, I shall impute them to you. It is true that, however far off, my eye will be upon you, and my arm stretched out over you; but, as long as you are faithful, this my presence will be your protection. After the blessing, the amnesty I have promised will be read. This, my act of forgiveness, is sincere. Show that yours is so, I entreat, by cherishing the peace of the colony. By the sanctity of the place on which we stand, let there be peace among us all, and mutual forgiveness for all time to come!"

"Amen!" again resounded, louder than the most joyous strain of the choir that ever rang through the building.

L'Ouverture went back to his place, surrounded by the eleven released men, for whom room was made round his person by those who best could read his eye. After the priest had given the blessing, the amnesty was read which declared pardon for all political offenses, and all personal offenses against the commander-in-chief up to that hour. The moment it was concluded, those who had arrived at the church in custody left it in freedom, though in shame, and sped away to their several homes, as if the death they had anticipated were at their heels. There they told their wonderful tale to their families, turning the desolation of wives and children into joy almost too great to be believed.

Afra found, to her satisfaction, that no one had entered to tell Euphrosyne of this act of L'Ouverture. Euphrosyne had been full of perplexity about the mulattoes—almost disposed

to think the whole race must have suddenly gone mad. She had seen them two hours before, flocking to church with faces whose gloom contrasted strangely with their numbers, their holiday dresses, and their eagerness to be in time to secure admittance. She now saw them return, as if intoxicated with joy, cheering the whole length of the Walk, and crying with an enthusiasm, if possible, surpassing that of the blacks, "Long live the Deliverer!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE COUNCIL OF FIVE.

A COUNCIL was held one morning, soon after the events just related, whose aspect would have perplexed an old colonist if he could have looked forward in vision to that day. In a shady apartment of Toussaint's house at Pongaudin sat five men, in whose hands lay the fortunes of the colony—and only one of these men was a white.

The five came to report well to one another of the fortunes of the colony. Never, in the old days, could any set of councilors have been gathered together who could have brought with them such proofs of the welfare and comfort of every class of inhabitants. In former times, the colonial legislators were wont to congratulate the Assembly on the good working of their system; which meant that the negroes were quiet, the mulattoes kept under, and the crops promising; but under this "good working" there were the heart-burnings of the men of color, the woes and the depravity of the slaves, and the domestic fears and discomforts of the masters arising from this depravity. Now, when there was no oppression and no slavery, the simple system of justice was truly "working well;" not only in the prospect of the crops and the external quiet of the proprietors, but in the hearts and heads of every class of men—of perhaps every family in the island.

Jacques Dessalines had arrived from St. Marc, near which his estate lay. He had to tell how the handsome crescent of freestone houses behind the quay was extending—how busy were the wharves—how the store-houses were overflowing—how the sea was covered with merchant-ships—and how the cheerful hum of prosperous industry was heard the long day through.

Henri Christophe had come from the city of St. Domingo quite through the interior of the island. He had to tell how the reinstated whites paid him honor as he passed, on account of his friendship with L'Ouverture—how the voice of song went up from the green valleys and from the cottage door—how the glorious Artibonite rolled its full tide round the base of mountains which no longer harbored the rana-way or the thief, and through plains adorned with plenty and smiling with peace.

M. Raymond arrived from the sittings of the

Central Assembly. What good things he had to report will presently be seen.

Toussaint, with M. Pascal, had arrived from Cap, where all was at present quiet, and where he had done the best he could, as he believed, by making Moyses a general, and leaving him in charge of the town and district, till a person could be found fit for the difficult and most anxious office of governor of Cap. The two most doubtful points of the colony were Port-au-Prince and Cap Français. They had been the great battle-grounds of races—they were the refuge of the discontented whites—and they were open to the operations of factious people from France. L'Ouverture was never sure of the peace and quiet of Cap as long as French ships came and went; but there was peace in the town at the present moment; and he had left that peace in the temporary charge of one who had done much, under his eye, to establish it—who had shown no small energy and talent, and who had every inducement that could be conceived to go through his brief task well. Great had been Toussaint's satisfaction in offering to Moyses this honorable opportunity of distinguishing himself; and much had he enjoyed the anticipation of telling Générède of this fulfilment of her lover's ambition, and of the near approach of their union in consequence. It is true, he had been disappointed by Générède's receiving this news with a shudder, and by none but forced smiles having been seen from her since; but he trusted that this was only a fit of apprehension, natural to one who loved so passionately, and that it would but enhance the bliss that was to succeed.

If, as usual, L'Ouverture had to report the situation of Cap Français as precarious, he brought good tidings of the South. An express had met him on his journey homeward with news of the total defeat of the insurgent mulattoes by Vincent. Rigaud had surrendered his designs, and had actually sailed, with his principal officers, for France. Thus was the last torch of war extinguished in the colony, and matters of peaceful policy alone lay before the Council of Five.

The announcement of the entire pacification of the island was the first made by L'Ouverture, when his friends and councilors looked eagerly to him for what he should say.

"Vincent is a fine fellow," said Dessalines, "and a credit to his color."

"He has been in the most pressing danger," observed Toussaint. "God willed that he should escape, when escape appeared impossible."

"What is to be done now with these cowardly devils of mulattoes?" asked Dessalines.

M. Pascal glanced at Raymond to see how he bore this. Raymond chanced to meet his eye, and replied to the glance,

"You will not take me for a cowardly mulatto, M. Pascal, if I do not resent Dessalines's words. He is speaking of the rebels, not of the many mulattoes who, like myself, disap-

prove and despise all such jealousy of race as leads to the barbarism of aggressive war."

"Yet," said Christophe, "I wish that we should all avoid such language as provokes jealousy of race."

"In council one must speak plainly," replied Dessalines. "I hope M. Pascal agrees with me; for, doubtless, certain affairs of the whites will be in question, with regard to which they may be uncivilly spoken of. I was going to say, for instance (what L'Ouverture's secretary ought to be able to bear), that if we wish this state of peace to last, we must studiously keep the whites down—exclude them from all situations of power and trust. You all know that, in my opinion, they ought every one to have been done with some time ago. As that was not effected, the next best policy is to let them die out. One may compute pretty well the time that this will take. If nothing better remains for them here than to live upon their estates without a chance of distinction, or of employment in public affairs, they will grow tired of the colony; the next generation, at furthest, will be glad to sell their property and go home; and we shall be rid of them."

"By that time, Jacques," said Toussaint, "you and I may find ourselves again in the midst of them, in a place whence we can not drive them out."

Dessalines's countenance told, as well as words could have done, that heaven would be no heaven to him if the spirits of white men were there. Toussaint well understood it, and resumed,

"Better begin here what may be our work there—draw closer, and learn from them the wisdom by which they have been the masters of the world: while they may learn from us, if they will, forgiveness of injuries."

"I am sick of hearing all that, Toussaint. It is forever in your mouth."

"Because it is forever in my heart. You will hear it from me, Jacques, till I see there is no occasion to say it more. As to Vincent, I propose to keep him, in token of honor, near my person; and to request the Central Assembly to decree to him an estate of such value as they shall think proper, to be purchased from the public treasury."

"That is, supposing he should desire to remain among us," observed Christophe; "but Vincent is fond of France."

"Then his estate shall be in France, Henri. Our friend Raymond will charge himself with this business in the Assembly."

"If I bring it forward in the form of a message from yourself," replied Raymond, "there is no doubt of its being carried by acclamation. The finances of the colony are flourishing, and the attachment of the Assembly to your person most enthusiastic."

"What of the finances?" asked Toussaint.

Raymond gave from his notes a statement, which showed that both the customs' duties and internal taxes had been productive beyond

all expectation; that the merchant-ships of almost every nation had visited the ports; and that, after defraying the expenses of the war now closed, there would be a surplus sufficient for the extension of the schools, and the formation of some new roads.

"What of the attachment of the Assembly to L'Ouverture's person?" asked Christophe.

"Every member of it sees that the prosperity of the island is the consequence of the vigorous prosecution of his system; and that there is no security but in its unquestioned continuance. The commander-in-chief having been thus proved as eminently fitted for civil as for military government, the Assembly proposes to constitute him president of the colony for life, with power to choose his successor, and to appoint to all offices."

All eyes were now fixed upon Toussaint. He observed that a dark cloud must have hidden France from the eyes of the Assembly when they framed this proposition of independent sovereignty.

Raymond had no doubt that France would agree to have her colony governed in the best possible manner. If there should be a difficulty about the title of president, that of governor might be substituted. The power being the same, there need not be a quarrel about the title. The Assembly would yield that point—probably the only one that France would dispute.

M. Pascal believed that France would never yield the power of appointing to offices of importance for life, still less that of choosing a successor.

"France ought not to yield such powers," said Toussaint; "and the Assembly ought not to bring upon me (representative as I am of my race) the imputation of a personal ambition which I abjure and despise. I could tell the Assembly that, if I had chosen to stoop under the yoke of personal ambition, I might have been sovereign of this island without waiting for their call. Yes," he continued, in answer to the inquiring looks of his friends, "I have in my possession a treaty proposed to me by the British Government, in which the English offer to make me king of this island—in such case to be called by its ancient name of Hayti—on condition of exclusive commerce."

"Is it even so?" exclaimed Christophe.

"Even so, Henri. The English believed that I had acted on my own account; and that we, the children of France, should turn against our mother in the day of her perplexity, and join hands with her foes."

"Any other man would have done it," said M. Pascal.

"No, Pascal; no man who was appointed, like me, to redeem his race."

"How do you consider that you will injure your race by accepting the proposal of the Assembly?" asked M. Pascal. "I understand why you would accept nothing from the hands of the English, and also why you would hesi-

tate to assume a power which the Government at home would doubtless disallow. But how would your race be injured by honors paid to you?"

"You are my friend," replied Toussaint. "Is it possible that you can fail to understand?"

"I call myself your friend too," said Dessalines, "and I declare I can comprehend nothing of it."

"Your prejudices on one point are strong, Jacques; and prejudice is blind. M. Pascal is singularly unprejudiced, and therefore I believed that he would understand me."

"Perhaps I do; but I wish to hear your reasons from yourself."

"Particularly," interposed Raymond, "as to whether you believe the blacks (who are, we know, your first object) would be more benefited by continued connection with France or by independence. I believe M. Pascal is unprejudiced enough to bear the discussion of even this point."

"It is that which I wish to understand clearly," observed M. Pascal.

"Whether, if I believed my race would be benefited by the independence of this island, I could answer it to my conscience to separate from France," said Toussaint, "we need not decide, as I am convinced that, amidst all the errors committed under the orders of Government, it is best for us to remain in connection with France. The civilization of the whites is the greatest educational advantage we could enjoy. Yes, Jacques; and the more we despise it, the more we prove that we need it. The next great reason for remaining faithful is that we owe it to the white inhabitants of the colony not to deprive them of their connection with Paris, on the one hand, nor of their liberty to live and prosper here, on the other. As regards my own peculiar position, I feel that my first duty is to present an example of reverence and affection for my country, and not of a selfish ambition. I may have other personal reasons also, tending to the same conclusion."

"Some favorite passages in Epictetus perhaps, or in the Bible," said Jacques; "some reasons confirmed by the whispers of the priests. Nothing short of priestly influence could blind you to such an opportunity as we now have of disembarassing ourselves of the whites forever."

"Patience, Jacques!" said Toussaint, smiling.

"I believe," said Christophe, "that there is neither book nor priest in the case. I believe that it is your peculiar feeling toward Bonaparte, Toussaint, which strengthens your affection for France."

Christophe saw, by a glance at his friend's countenance, that he was right.

"I should act as you do," Henri continued, "if I were certain of a full and generous reciprocity of feeling on the part of the Government and of Bonaparte. But I have no such confidence."

"Hear him!" cried Dessalines and Raymond.

"You were not wont to doubt Bonaparte, Henri," observed Toussaint.

"Because, till of late, there was no reason to doubt him. I still believe that he was in earnest at the outset, in his professed desire to serve France for the sake of France, and not for his own. But I believe that he has a head less strong than yours; that we shall see him transformed from the pacificator into the aggressor; that, instead of waiting upon his pleasure, we may have to guard against injury from him."

"These words from the generous Henri," said Toussaint, "are portentous."

"I may be wrong, Toussaint. God grant, for the sake of the liberties of the world, that I may be proved mistaken! But, in the hour of choice between your sovereignty and continued dependence, you must not suppose the sympathy between the First of the Whites and the First of the Blacks to be greater than it is."

Toussaint could have told how Henri's words only confirmed misgivings as to the public virtue of Bonaparte which had long troubled his secret soul.

"Are you willing," he asked of M. Pascal, "to tell us your anticipations as to the career of the First Consul? Do not speak if you prefer to be silent."

"I can not predict confidently," replied Pascal; "but I should not be surprised if we see Bonaparte unable to resist the offer of sovereignty. Once crowned, and feeling himself still compelled to speak incessantly of the good of his country, his views of good will become debased. He will invest France with military glory, and sink into ruin by becoming a conqueror; a vulgar destiny in this age—a destiny which Alexander himself would probably scorn, if now born again into the world."

"Alas! my poor blacks, if this be indeed Bonaparte!" exclaimed Toussaint. "Their supreme need is of peace, and they may become the subjects of a conqueror."

"And happy if they be no worse than subjects," said Christophe.

"If," said Toussaint, "Bonaparte respects the liberties of the French no more than to reduce them from being a nation to being an army, he will not respect the liberties of the blacks, and will endeavor to make them once more slaves."

"Ah! you see!" exclaimed Dessalines.

"I neither see nor believe, Jacques. We are only speculating. I will be thoroughly faithful to my allegiance till Bonaparte is unquestionably unfaithful to the principles by which he rose. At the moment, however, when he lifts his finger in menace of the liberties of the blacks, I will declare myself the champion of St. Domingo—not, however, through the offices of the English, but by the desire of those whom I govern."

"Say King of Hayti," exclaimed Christophe.

"This island was Hayti when it lay blooming in the midst of the ocean, fresh from the will of God, thronged with gentle beings who had never lifted up a hand against each other. It was Hayti when it received, as into a paradise, the first whites who came into our hemisphere, and who saw in our valleys and plains the Eden of the Scripture. It became St. Domingo when vice crept into it, and oppression turned its music into sighs, and violence laid it waste with famine and the sword. While the blacks and whites yet hate each other, let it be still St. Domingo; but when you withdraw us from jealousy and bloodshed, let it again be Hayti. While it holds its conquered name there will be heart-burnings. If it became our own Hayti, we might not only forgive, but forget. It would be a noble lot to be King of Hayti!"

"If so ordained, Henri. We must wait till it be so. My present clear duty is to cultivate peace and the friendship of the whites. They must have their due from us, from Bonaparte himself to the youngest infant in Cap. You may trust me, however, that from the hour that there is a whisper about slavery in the lightest of Bonaparte's dreams, I will consent to be called by whatever name can best defend our race."

"It will be too late then," said Dessalines. "Why wait till Bonaparte tells you his dreams? We know without being told that all the dreams of all whites are of our slavery."

"You are wrong, Jacques. That is no more true of all whites, than it is true of all blacks that they hate the whites as you do."

"You will find too late that I am not wrong," said Jacques. "Remember, in the day of our ruin, that my timely advice to you was to send for your sons from Paris, and then avow yourself King of St. Domingo—or of Hayti, if you like that name better. To me that name tells of another colored race, whom the whites wantonly oppressed and destroyed. One can not traverse the island without hearing the ghosts of those poor Indians, from every wood and every hill, calling to us for vengeance on their conquerors."

"Take care how you heed those voices, Dessalines," said Christophe. "They are not the voices of the gentle Indians that you hear; for the whites who injured them are long ago gone to judgment."

"And if they were still in the midst of us," said Toussaint, "vengeance is not ours. Jacques knows that my maxim in the field—my order, which may not be transgressed—is, NO RETALIATION! I will have the same rule obeyed in my council-chamber, as we all, I trust, observe it in our prayers. Jacques, you have not now to learn my principle and my command—NO RETALIATION. Have you ever known it infringed since the hour when you found me at Breda and made me your chief?"

"Never."

"Nor shall you, while I am obeyed. If the hour for defense comes, we shall be ready. Till then, we owe allegiance."

"You will find it too late," Dessalines said once more.

"The Assembly," said Toussaint to Raymond, "will withdraw their proposition regarding my being president of this island. I have all needful power as commander-in-chief of the colony."

"They have already published their request," said Raymond, "which I do not regret, because—"

"I regret it much," said Toussaint. "It will incense France."

"I do not regret it," pursued Raymond, "because it renders necessary the publication of your refusal, which can not but satisfy France."

"On the point of Toussaint's supposed ambition, it may satisfy France," observed Christophe. "But if Bonaparte be jealous of the influence of the First of the Blacks, this homage of the Assembly will not abate his jealousy."

"Have you more messages for us, Raymond? No. Then M. Pascal and I will examine these reports, and prepare my replies. This our little council is memorable, friends, for being the first in which we could report of the entire pacification of the colony. May it be only the first of many! My friends, our council is ended."

CHAPTER XIX.

LEISURE FOR ONCE.

PRECIOUS to the statesman are the moments he can snatch for the common pleasures which are strewed over the earth—meant, apparently, for the perpetual enjoyment of all its inhabitants. The child gathers flowers in the meadow, or runs up and down a green bank, or looks for birds'-nests every spring day. The boy and girl hear the lark in the field and the linnet in the wood, as a matter of course: they walk beside the growing corn, and pass beneath the rookery, and feel nothing of its being a privilege. The sailor beholds the stars every bright night of the year, and is familiar with the thousand hues of the changing sea. The soldier on his march sees the sun rise and set on mountain and valley, plain and forest. The citizen, pent up in the centre of a wide-built town, has his hour for play with his little ones, his evenings for his wife and his friends. But for the statesman, none of these are the pleasures of every day. Week after week, month after month, he can have no eyes for the freshness of nature, no leisure for small affairs, or for talk about things which can not be called affairs at all. He may gaze at pictures on his walls, and hear music from the drawing-room in the brief intervals of his labors; and he may now and then be taken by surprise by a glimpse of the cool bright stars, or by the waving of the boughs of some neighboring tree. He may be beguiled by the grace or the freak of some little child,

or struck by some wandering flower-scent in the streets, or some effect of sunlight on the evening cloud. But with these few and rare exceptions, he loses sight of the natural earth and of its free intercourses for weeks and months together; and precious in proportion—precious beyond his utmost anticipation—are his hours of holiday when at length they come. He gazes at the crescent moon hanging above the woods, and at the long morning shadows on the dewy grass, as if they would vanish before his eyes. He is intoxicated with the gurgle of the brook upon the stones when he seeks the trout-stream with his line and basket. The whirring of the wild bird's wing upon the moor—the bursting of the chase from cover—the creaking of the harvest wain—the song of the vine-dressers—the laugh of the olive-gatherers—in every land where these are heard, they make a child once more of the statesman who may for once have come forth to hear them. Sweeter still is the leisure hour with children in the garden or the meadow, and the quiet stroll with wife or sister in the evening, or the gay excursion during a whole day of liberty. If Sunday evenings are sweet to the laborer whose toils involve but little action of mind, how precious are his rarer holidays to the state laborer, after the wear and tear of toil like his—after his daily experience of intense thought, of anxiety, and fear! In the path of such should spring the freshest grass, and on their heads should fall the softest of the moonlight, and the balmiest of the airs of heaven, if natural rewards are in any proportion to their purchase-money of toil.

The choicest holiday moments of the great negro statesman were those which he could spend with his wife and children, away from observing eyes and listening ears. He was never long pent up in the city, or detained by affairs within the walls of his palace. His business lay abroad for the most part; and he came and went continually, on horseback, throughout every part of the island. Admirable as were his laws and regulations, and zealously as he was served by his agents of every description, there was no security for the working of his system so good as his own frequent presence among the adoring people. This same love which made him so powerful abroad interfered with his comfort at home. There were persons ever on the watch for a glimpse of him, eager to catch every word and every look: and the very rarest of his pleasures was unwitnessed intercourse with his family.

At length, when Hédouville was gone away from one port and Rigaud from another—when neither spy nor foe appeared to remain—it seemed to be time for him, who had given peace and leisure to every body else, to enjoy a little of it himself. He allowed his children, therefore, to fix a day when he should go with them on a fishing excursion round the little island of Gonaïves, which was a beautiful object from the windows of the house at Pongaudin, as it lay in the midst of the bay.

The excursion had answered completely. General Vincent, leaving the south of the island in a state of perfect tranquillity, had arrived to enjoy his honors in the presence of L'Ouverture and his family. Madame Dessalines had come over from St. Marc. As Afra was of the party, M. Pascal had found it possible to leave his papers for a few hours. Toussaint had caught as many fish as if he had been Paul himself. He had wandered away with his girls into the wood, till he was sent to the boats again by the country people who gathered about him; and he lay hidden with Denis under the awning of the barge, playing duck and drake on the smooth water, till the islanders found out where he was, and came swimming out to spoil their sport. It was a day too soon gone: but yet he did not consider it ended when they landed at Pongaudin at ten o'clock. The moon was high, the gardens looked lovely, and he led his wife away from the party, among the green alleys of the shrubbery.

"I want to know what you think," exclaimed Madame L'Ouverture, as they emerged from a shaded walk upon a grass-plot, on which the light lay clear and strong; "I want to ask you"—and, as she spoke, she looked round to see that no one was at hand—"whether you do not think that General Vincent loves Aimée?"

"I think he does. I suspected it before, and to-day I am sure of it."

"And are not you glad?"

"That partly depends on whether Aimée loves him. I doubt whether Vincent, who is usually a confident fellow enough, is so happy about the matter as you are."

"Aimée is not one who will ever show herself too ready—Aimée is very quiet—"

"Well, but is she ready in her heart? Does she care about Vincent?"

"I do not know that she does quite yet—though I think she likes him very much too. But surely she will love him—she must love him—so much as he loves her—and so delightful, so desirable a match as it is in every way!"

"You think it so."

"Why, do not you? Consider how many years we have known him, and what confidence you had in him when you sent him with our dear boys to Paris! And now he has done great things in the South. He comes, covered with glory, to ask us for our Aimée. What could be more flattering?"

"It was our child's future happiness that I was thinking of when I seemed to doubt. Vincent is full of good qualities; but he is so wholly French that—"

"Not so French as M. Pascal, who was born, brought up, and employed at Paris; and you are pleased that he should marry Afra."

"Vincent is more French than Pascal, though he is a black. He is devoted to Bonaparte—"

"What of that?" said Madame L'Ouverture, after a pause. "He is devoted to you also.

And are you not yourself devoted to France and to Bonaparte? Do we not pray together for him every day of our lives?"

"Remember, Margot, to pray for him every day, as long as you live, if I am separated from you by death or otherwise. Pray that such a blessing may rest upon him as that he may be wise to see his duty, and strong to do it. If he injures us, pray that he may be forgiven."

"I will," replied Margot, in a low voice; "but—"

She was lost in considering what this might mean.

"As for Vincent," resumed Toussaint, "my doubt is whether, with his views and tastes, he ought to ally himself with a doomed man."

"Vincent is ambitious, my dear husband; and, even if he did not love our child as he does, he might be anxious to ally himself with one so powerful—so full of honors—with so very great a man as you. I would not speak exactly so if we were not alone; but it is very true, now that the Central Assembly has declared you supreme in the colony. Consider what Vincent must think of that! And he has traveled so much in the island, that he must have seen how you deserve all that is said of you. He has seen how all the runaways have come down from the mountains, and the pirates in from the reefs and the coves; and how they are all honestly cultivating the fields and fishing in the bays. He has seen how rich the whole island is growing; and how contented, and industrious, and honest the people are, in this short time. He has seen that all this is your work; and he may well be ambitious to be your son-in law."

"Unless he has the foresight to perceive, with all this, that I am a doomed man."

"I thought you said so—I thought I heard that word before," said Margot, in a trembling voice; "but I could not believe it."

Toussaint knew by her tone that some vague idea of evil agency—some almost forgotten superstition, was crossing her imagination; and he hastened to explain.

"Do not imagine," said he, solemnly, "do not for a moment suppose that God is not on our side—that he will for a moment forsake us. But it is not always his pleasure that his servants should prosper, though their good work prospers in the end. I firmly trust and believe that our Father will not permit us to be made slaves again; but it may be his will that I and others should fall in defending our freedom."

"But the wars are at an end. Your battles are all over, my love."

"How can we be sure of that, when Bonaparte has yet to learn what the Assembly has done? Hédoouville is on the way home, eager to report of the blacks, while he is ignorant of their minds, and prejudiced about their conduct. M. Papalier and other planters are at Paris, at the ear of Bonaparte, while his ear is already so quickened by jealousy that it takes in the lightest whisper against me and my race.

How can we say that my battles are over, love, when every new success and honor makes this man, who ought to be my brother, yet more my foe?"

"Oh, write to him! Write to him, and tell him how you would have him be a brother to you!"

"Have I not written twice, and had no reply but neglect? I wrote to him to announce the earliest prospect of entire peace. I wrote again, to explain my intercourse with his agent Roume, and requested his sanction of what I had done. There has been no reply."

"Then write again. Write this very night!"

"I wrote yesterday, to inform him fully concerning the new constitution framed by the Assembly. I told him that it should be put in force provisionally till the pleasure of his Government is made known."

"Oh, then that must bring an answer."

Toussaint was silent.

"He must send some sort of answer to that," pursued Margot. "What answer do you think it will be?"

"You remember the great eagle that I shot when we lived under the mountains, Margot? Do you remember how the kids played in the pasture, with the shadow of that huge eagle floating above them?"

Margot, trembling, pressed closer to her husband's side.

"You saw to-day," he continued, "that troop of gay dolphins in the smooth sea beyond the island. You saw the shark, with its glaring eyes, opening its monstrous jaws as it rose near the pretty creatures, and hovered about them."

"But you shot the eagle," cried Margot; "and Denis wounded the shark."

"Heaven only knows how it may end with us," said Toussaint; "but we have the shadow of Bonaparte's jealousy over us, and danger all about us. The greater our prosperity, the more certain is it to bring all France down upon us."

"Oh, can Bonaparte be so cruel?"

"I do not blame him for this our danger; and any future woe must all go to the account of our former slavery. We negroes are ignorant, and have been made loose, deceitful, and idle by slavery. The whites have been made tyrannical and unjust by being masters. They believe us now ambitious, rebellious, and revengeful, because it would be no wonder if we were so. All this injustice comes of our former slavery. God forbid that I should be unjust too, and lay the blame where it is not due! For nothing done or feared in St. Domingo do I blame Bonaparte."

"Then you think—oh, say you think there is no danger for Placide and Isaac. Bonaparte is so kind to them! Surely Placide and Isaac can be in no danger!"

"There is no fear for their present safety, my love."

Toussaint would not for the world have told of his frequent daily thought and nightly dream

as to what might be the fate of these hostages, deliberately sent to France, and deliberately left there now. He would not subject himself to entreaties respecting their return which he dared not listen to, now that their recall would most certainly excite suspicions of the fidelity of the blacks. Not to save his children would L'Ouverture do an act to excite or confirm any distrust of his people.

"Bonaparte is kind to them, as you say, Margot. And if Vincent should win our Aimée, that will be another security for the lads; for no one doubts his attachment to France."

"I hope Vincent will win her. But when will you send for the boys? They have been gone very long. When will you send?"

"As soon as affairs will allow. Do not urge me, Margot. I think of it day and night."

"Then there is some danger. You would not speak so if there were not. Oh, my husband! marry Vincent to Aimée! You say that will be a security."

"We must not forget Aimée herself, my love. If she should hereafter find her heart torn between her lover and her parents—if the hour should come for every one here to choose between Bonaparte and me, and Vincent should still adore the First of the Whites, what will become of the child of the First of the Blacks? Ought not her parents to have foreseen such a struggle?"

"Alas! what is to become of us all, Toussaint?"

"Perhaps Génifrède is the happiest of our children, Margot. She looks anxious to-day; but in a few more days I hope even her trembling heart will be at rest."

"It never will," said Margot, mournfully. "I think there is some evil influence upon our poor child to afflict her with perpetual fear. She still fears ghosts rather than fear nothing. She enjoys nothing except when Moysé is by her side."

"Well, Moysé will presently be by her side, and for life. I was proud of him, Margot, last week at Cap. I knew his military talents from the day when we used to call the boy General Moysé. I saw by his eye, when I announced him as General Moysé in Cap, that he remembered those old days on the north shore. Oh, yes, I was aware of his talents in that direction from his boyhood; but I found in him power of another kind. You know what a passionate lover he is?"

"Yes, indeed. Never did I see such a lover?"

"Well, he puts this same power and devotedness into his occupation of the hour, whatever it may be."

"Do you mean that he forgets Génifrède when he is away from her?"

"I rather hope that it is the remembrance of her that animates him in his work. I am sure that it is so; for I said a few words to him about home which made him very happy. If I were to see him failing, as we once feared he

would—if I saw him yielding to his passions—to the prejudices and passions of the negro and the slave—my reproof would be, ‘You forget Génifrède.’ Moyses has yet much to learn and much to overcome; yet I look upon Génifrède as perhaps the most favored of our children. It is so great a thing to be so beloved!”

“It is, indeed, the greatest thing.” Margot stopped as a turn in the walk brought them in view of the house. The long ranges of verandah stood in the moonlight, checkered with the still shadows of the neighboring trees. Every window of the large white mansion gave out a stream of yellow light, to contrast with the silvery shining of the moon. “This is very unlike the hut we went to when we were married, Toussaint. Yet I was quite happy and contented. It is, indeed, the greatest thing to be loved.”

“And have you not the greatest thing here too? Do I not love you, my Margot?”

“Oh yes! Yes, indeed, we love each other as much as we did then—in that single room, with its earthen floor, and its cribs against the wall, and the iron pot in the fire-place, and the hen pecking before the door. But, Toussaint, look at the difference now! Look at this beautiful house, and all the gardens and cane-pieces—and think of our palace at Port-au-Prince—and think of the girls as they look at church, or in the boat to-day—and how the country is up, rejoicing, wherever you go—and how the Assembly consider you—think of all that has happened since that wedding-day of ours at Breda! It is so fine, so wonderful, that you shall not frighten me about any thing that can happen. I am sure the blessing of God is upon you, my husband, and you shall not make me afraid.”

“I would have none be afraid while God reigns, Margot. May you ever say that you will not fear! The blessing of God may be on us now, love; but it was never more so than when we went home to our hut at Breda. When I lay under the trees at noon, taking care of the cattle, how many things I used to think of to say to you when I came home!”

“And so did I, as I knelt at my washing by the brook-side, and you were driving M. Bayou twenty miles off, and were expected home in the evening. How much there was to say at the end of those days!”

“It was not for ourselves, then, Margot, that we have been raised to what we are. We were as happy drawing water in the wood and gathering plantains in the negro-grounds as we have ever been in these shrubberies. We were as merry in that single room at Breda as in this mansion or in our palace. It is not for our own sakes that we have been so raised.”

“It is pleasant for our children.”

“It is. And it is good for our race. It is to make us their servants. Oh, Margot! if ever you find a thought of pride stirring at your heart, remember that if the blacks were less ignorant and more wise, it would not matter

whether we lived as we used to do or as we live now. It is because we negroes are vain and corrupted that show and state are necessary; and the sight and show of our state should therefore humble us.”

“I am sure you are not fond of show and state. You eat, and drink, and wait upon yourself as you did at Breda; and your uniform is the only fine dress you like to wear. I am sure you had rather have no court.”

“Very true. I submit to such state as we have about us for the sake of the negroes who need it. To me it is a sacrifice; but, Margot, we must make sacrifices—perhaps some which you may little dream of while looking round upon our possessions, and our rank, and our children, worshiped as they are. We must carry the same spirit of sacrifice into all our acts; and be ready to suffer, and perhaps to fall, for the sake of the blacks. The less pride now, Margot, the less shame and sorrow then!”

“I wish not to be proud,” said Margot, trembling; “I pray that I may not be proud; but it is difficult—Hark! there is a footstep! Let us turn into this alley.”

“Nay,” said Toussaint, “it is M. Pascal. No doubt I am wanted.”

“Forever wanted!” exclaimed Margot. “No peace!”

“It was not so at Breda,” said Toussaint, smiling. “I was just speaking of sacrifice, you know; and this is not the last night that the moon will shine. News, M. Pascal?”

“News from Cap,” replied M. Pascal, in a depressed tone. “Bad news! Here are dispatches. Not a moment is to be lost.”

“There is light enough,” said Toussaint, turning so that the moonlight fell upon the page.

While he read, M. Pascal told Madame L’Ouvverture that messengers had brought news of a quarrel at Cap—a quarrel between the races, unhappily, about Hedouville’s proclamation again—a quarrel in which several whites had been killed. All was presently quiet; but the whites were crying out for vengeance.

“No peace, as you say, Margot,” observed Toussaint, as he ran over the letters. “See what a strong hand and watchful eye our poor people require! The curse of slavery is still upon us.”

“How is Moyses? Tell me only that. What is Moyses doing?”

“I do not understand Moyses, nor what he is doing,” said Toussaint, gloomily. “M. Pascal—”

“Your horses are coming round,” said Pascal, “and I shall be there almost as soon as you.”

“Right: and Laxabon. From me, ask the favor of Father Laxabon to follow without delay. Margot, take care of poor Génifrède. Farewell!”

As he passed through the piazza to mount his horse, Toussaint saw Génifrède standing there like a statue. He embraced her, and

found her cold as marble. He returned to his family for an instant, to beg that she might not be immediately disturbed. In an hour or two she might be able to speak to her mother or sister; but she could not now. Once more he whispered to her that he would send her early news, and was gone.

Again and again Aimée looked timidly forth to see if she might venture to approach her sister. Once Madame L'Ouverture went to her, and once Thérèse; but she would say nothing but "Leave me!" From her they went to Afra, who wept incessantly, though she did not reject their consolations. The night wore on wearily and drearily. When the moon set, and the damps were felt wherever the air penetrated, Madame L'Ouverture went once more to Génifrède, determined to take her to her own chamber, and win her to open her heart. But Génifrède was not there, nor in her chamber. The mother's terror was great, till a cultivator came to say that Mademoiselle L'Ouverture had gone a journey on horseback with her brother Denis to take care of her. Denis's bed was indeed found empty, and two horses were gone from the stables. They had fled to Moysse, no doubt. The hope was, that they might fall in with Father Laxabon on the road, who would surely bring the poor girl back. There was another road, however; and by this road Thérèse declared that she would follow.

"Yes, yes—go!" exclaimed Madame L'Ouverture. "She thinks you understand her. She says—"

"She loves me," said Thérèse, sighing, "because—I hardly know—but Heaven forgive me if it be as she says."

"She says you hate the whites," declared Aimée. "If it be so, may indeed Heaven forgive you! Moysse hates the whites; and you see how wretched we are!"

"Aimée, do not be hard. We are made to love—my heart inclines to all who are about me: but if there are some—if one can not—oh, Aimée, do not be hard!"

"It is those who hate who are hard," said Aimée, whose tears fell fast, in sympathy with Afra's. "Is it not so, Afra?"

"Well, I will go," said Thérèse, gently. "One kiss, Aimée, for Génifrède's sake!"

"For your own," said Aimée, tenderly embracing her. "Bring back poor Génifrède! Tell her we will devote ourselves to her."

"Bring back my child," said Margot. "Be sure you tell her that there may be good news yet. Moysse may have explanations to give; he may do great things yet."

These words renewed Afra's weeping, in the midst of which Thérèse hastened away; when the remnant of the anxious family retired to their chambers, not to sleep, but to pray and wait.

CHAPTER XX.

PERPLEXITY.

As it might be supposed, M. Revel and his grandchild had no desire to remain in the Government-house a moment longer than was necessary, as Afra was obliged to leave it. Afra's last care, before quitting Cap, was to see that her friends were properly escorted to their home.

Euphrosyne was still struggling with the grief of saying farewell to Afra when she entered the pleasant sitting-room at home; but she smiled through her tears when she saw how cheerful it looked. There was a mild, cool light in the room, proceeding from the reflection of the sunshine from the trees of the convent garden. The blinds were open; and the perspective of one of the alleys was seen in the large mirror on the wall—the shrubs noiselessly waving, and the gay flowers nodding, in a sunlight and breeze which were not felt within. Euphrosyne's work lay upon the table; the needle sticking in the very stitch of embroidery at which she had laid it down, when she went to see if her grandfather was awake, on the morning of their alarm. Some loose music had been blown down from the stand upon the floor; and the bouquet of flowers was dead, the water dried up, and the leaves fallen to dust; but, when these were removed, there were no further signs of neglect and desertion.

"How bright, how natural every thing looks!" cried Euphrosyne. "I do love this room. This is the place that we thought was to be sacked and burned. I won't believe such nonsense another time. I never will be frightened again. Grandpapa, do not you love this room?"

"It is a pretty room, my dear; and it looks very bright when you are in it."

"Oh, thank you!" she cried, dropping a sportive courtesy. "And now, will you look at my work—(sit down here)—and tell me—(where are your glasses?)—tell me whether you ever saw a prettier pattern. It is a handkerchief fit for a princess."

"It is very prettily worked, my dear. And whom is it for? Some very elegant lady? Is it for the First Consul's lady? They say she is the most elegant lady in the world—though she is a creole, like you, my darling. Is your pretty handkerchief for her?"

"No, grandpapa. I dare say she has all the ladies in France to work for her. I should like, if you have no objection, to send this to Madame L'Ouverture."

"To Madame L'Ouverture! Why? Has not she daughters to work handkerchiefs for her, and plenty of money to buy them? Why should you prick your fingers in her service?"

"I should like that L'Ouverture himself should observe some day that she has a beautiful handkerchief; and then, if he should ask, he would find out that there is a little creole girl who is very grateful to him for his generosity to her color."

“Do not speak of color, child. What expressions you pick up from Afra and such people! It is our distinction that we have no color—that we are white.”

“That is the distinction of the nuns, I know; but I hoped it was not mine yet. I do not forget how you pinch my cheek sometimes, and talk about roses.”

“What is there? What do I see?” cried the old man, whose mind seemed open to every thing agreeable that met his observation on his return home. “Are those the same little birds that you were wooing the other morning? No creature that has ever seen you, my dear, ever forgets you. Nothing that you have spoken to ever deserts you. Shy creatures, that are afraid of every body else, haunt you.”

“Oh, you are thinking of the little spotted fawn.”

“Spotted fawn or squirrel, baby or humming-bird, it is always the same, child. They all come to you. I dare say these little creatures have been flitting about the balcony and these rooms ever since we went away. Now they have found you.”

“They do not seem to care much about me, now we have met,” said Euphrosyne. She followed them softly to the balcony, and along it as far as the window of M. Revel’s room. There she found, stuck in the bars of the balcony, a rather fresh branch of orange-blossoms. While she was examining this in some surprise, old Raphael spoke to her from below. He said he had made bold to climb up by his ladder twice a day with something to entice the birds to that window, as he supposed that was what she would wish if she had been at home. The abbess had given him leave to take this liberty.

“There!” said M. Revel, when she flew to tell him; “there is another follower to add to your fawns and kittens. Old Raphael is considered a crusty fellow everywhere, and you see how different he is with you!”

“I am very glad,” declared Euphrosyne. “It is a pretty sight to amuse you with every morning when you wake. It is kind of Raphael, and of the abbess too.”

“I am pleased that the abbess and you should be good friends, Euphrosyne, because—Ah! that is the way,” he said, in a mortified tone, and throwing himself back in his chair, as he followed with his eyes the flittings of the girl about the room after her birds. “You have got your own way with every body, and we have spoiled you; and there is no speaking to you upon a subject that you do not like. You will not hear, though it is a thing that lies heavy at the heart of a dying old man.”

“I will hear you if you talk to me all my life,” said Euphrosyne, with brimming eyes, seating herself on a low stool at the old man’s knees.

“And if you hear me, you will not give me a grave, steady answer.”

“Try me,” she said, brushing away the gathering tears. “I am not crying about anything

you are going to say, but only because— Oh, grandpapa! how could you think I would not listen to you?”

“Well, well, my love! I see that you are willing now. You remember your promise to enter the convent if I desired it?”

“Yes.”

“You talk of nothing being changed by our alarm of two days ago, because this table stands in the middle of the room, and the ants and beetles have not carried off your pretty work. Hey!”

“May I speak, grandpapa?”

“Speak.”

“I said so because nobody’s house is burned or even robbed, and nobody has been killed or even hurt.”

“But, nevertheless, there is a great change. Our friends—my old friends—all whom I feel I could rely upon in case of need, are gone to France with Hédouville.”

“Oh, grandpapa, very few whites are gone; they were chiefly mulattoes who went with Hédouville; and so many whites remain! And though they are not, except, perhaps, M. Critois; exactly our friends, yet we can easily make acquaintance with them.”

“No, no, child. If they were not upstarts, as some of them are, and others returned emigrants, of whom I know nothing, it is too late now for me to make new friends. My old companions are gone, and the place is a desert to me.”

His hands hung listlessly as he rested on the arms of his chair. Euphrosyne looked up in his face while she said, as well as she could for tears,

“If you feel it so now, what will it be when I am shut up in the convent, and you will hardly ever see me?”

“That is no affair of yours, child. I choose that you should go.”

“Whose affair is it if it is not mine? I am your grandchild—your only one; and it is my business, and the greatest pleasure I have in the world, to be with you and wait upon you. If I leave you, I shall hear my poor mother reproaching me all day long. Every morning at my lessons, every night at my prayers, I shall hear her saying, ‘Where is your grandfather? How dare you desert him when he has only you left?’ Grandpapa, I shall be afraid to sleep alone. I shall learn to be afraid of my blessed mother.”

“It is time you were sent somewhere to learn your duty, I think. We are at a bad pass enough; but there must be some one in the colony who can tell you that it is your duty to obey your grandfather—that it is your duty to perform what you promised him.”

“I can preach that myself, grandpapa, when there is nobody else who can do it better. It is just what I have been teaching little Babet this month past. I have no more to learn about that; but I will tell you what I do want to learn—whether you are most afraid of my

growing up ignorant, or (do just let me finish, and then we shall agree charmingly, I dare say)—whether you are most afraid of my growing up ignorant, or unsteady, or ill-mannered, or wicked, or what? As for being unsafe, I do not believe a word of that."

"Every thing—all these things, child. I am afraid of them all."

"What, all! What a dreadfully unpromising creature I must be!"

"You know you must be very ignorant. You have had no one to teach you any thing."

"Then I will go to the convent to study for four, six, eight, twelve hours a day. I shall soon have learned every thing in the world at that rate: and yet I can go on singing to you in the evenings, and bringing you coffee in the mornings. Twelve hours' study a day may perhaps make me steady too. That was the next thing, was it not?"

"Now have done. Say only one thing more—that you will perform your promise."

"That is a thing of course; so I may just ask one other thing. Who is to wait upon you in my place? Ah! I see you have not fixed upon any one yet; and, let me tell you, it will be no easy matter to find one who makes coffee as I do. Then, you have been waited upon by a slave all your life. Yes, you have; and you have a slave now sitting at your knee. People do not like being slaves nowadays—nobody but me. Now I like it of all things. So, what a pity to change!"

"I know," said the old man, sighing, "that I am apt to be peremptory. I know it is difficult to please me sometimes. It is very late in life—I am very old to set about improving; but I will try not to hurt any one who will wait upon me, as I am afraid I have often hurt you, my dear. I will make any effort, if I can only feel that you are safe. Some one has been telling you stories of old times, I see. Perhaps you can ask any servant that we may engage—you may make it your request that she will bear with me."

"Oh, grandpapa! Stop, grandpapa! I can not bear it," cried the sobbing girl. "I never will joke again, if you do not see that it is because I love you so that I will venture any thing rather than leave you. We all love you dearly. Pierre would not for the world live with any body else. You know he would not. And that is just what I feel. But I will do every thing you wish. I will never refuse again—I will never jest, or try, even for your own sake, to prevent your having all your own way. Only be so kind, grandpapa, as never to say any thing against yourself again. Nobody else would dare to do such a thing to me, and I can not bear it."

"Well, well, love; I see now that no one has been babbling to you. We will never quarrel any more. You will do as I wish, and we will have no more disputing. Are they bringing our coffee?"

When Euphrosyne came out from placing

her grandfather's pillows and bidding him good-night, she found Pierre lingering about, as if wanting to speak to her.

"Have you any thing to say to me, Pierre?"

"Only just to take the liberty of asking, mademoiselle, whether you could not possibly gratify my master in the thing he has set his heart upon. If you could, mademoiselle, you may rely on it, I will take every care of him in your absence."

"I have no doubt, Pierre, of your doing your part."

"Your part and mine are not the same, I know, mademoiselle. But he is so persuaded of there being danger for you here, that every thing you do for him goes to his heart."

"Have you that idea, Pierre?"

"Indeed, mademoiselle, I know nothing about it—more than that it takes a long time for people in a town or an island to live comfortably together on equal terms, after having all their lives looked upon one another as tyrants, and low, revengeful servants."

"I do not think any one looks on me as a tyrant, or would think of hurting poor grandpapa or me. How you shake your head, Pierre! We have lived seven years in peace and quiet—sometimes being afraid, but never having found cause for fear. However, if grandpapa really is uneasy—"

"That is the point, mademoiselle. He is so."

"Do you suppose I could see the abbess, if I were to go to the convent to consult her? It is not late."

"If the Dumonts were but here still!" said Pierre; "only next door but one! It was a comfort to have them at hand on any difficulty."

"If they were here I should not consult them. They were so prejudiced against all the mulattoes, and put so little trust in L'Ouverture himself—as, indeed, their going off in such a hurry with Hédouville proves—that I should not have cared for their opinion to-night. Suppose you step to the convent, Pierre, and ask whether the lady abbess could see me for half an hour on business. If I am to leave grandpapa, I should like to tell him in the morning that it is all settled."

Pierre went with alacrity, and was back in three minutes, when he found Euphrosyne shawled and veiled for the visit. The lady awaited her.

"What can I do for you, my child?" said the abbess, kindly seating Euphrosyne beside her in her parlor.

"You will tell me what you think it is my duty to do when I have told you my story. I know I have laughed and joked too much about this very matter; and that partly because I had a will of my own about it. But it is all serious enough now; and I really do wish to find out my duty upon it."

"In order to do your duty, whatever it may cost you?"

"Certainly."

She then told her story. The lady at length smiled, and observed,

"You have no very strong inclination to join us, I perceive."

"Not any," frankly replied Euphrosyne. "I have no doubt the sisters are very happy. They chose their way of life for themselves. I only feel it is one that I should never choose. Nor would grandpapa for me for more than a short time. I hope, madam, you understand that we neither of us think of my ever becoming a nun?"

"I see that there is no present sign of its being your vocation."

"And there never will be," cried Euphrosyne, very earnestly. "I assure you, I can not bear the idea of it."

"So I perceive, my dear. I am quite convinced, I assure you. Have you as great a dislike to being educated?"

"Almost, I am afraid. But I could get over that. I like reading very well, and learning things at my own time and in my own way; but I feel rather old to begin to be under orders as to what I shall learn, and when and how; and yet rather young to be so grave and regular as the sisters are. I am fifteen, you know."

"You are not aware, I see, how much we laugh when we are by ourselves, nor how we like to see girls of fifteen happy and gay. I think, too, that I may answer for the sisters not quarreling with you about what you are to learn. You will comply with the rules of the house as to hours; and your preceptress will allow you, as far as possible, to follow your bent."

"You are very kind, as you always are. But I think far less of all this than of what grandpapa is to do without me. Consider what long, weary days he will have! He has scarcely any acquaintances left in Cap; and he has been accustomed to do nothing without me. He will sit and cry all day—I know he will."

And Euphrosyne's tears began to overflow at the thought.

"It is a great honor, my child, to have been made such a blessing to an old man."

"It was almost the only one he had left. Up to that terrible ninety-one—"

The abbess shuddered.

"You knew my mother and sisters?"

"Very little. I was then a humble sister, and had little intercourse with any ladies who might occasionally visit us. But I remember her coming one day with her children—three girls—one who ran about the garden, and two modest, blushing girls, who accepted some of our flowers."

"I must have been the little one who ran about, and the others were my poor sisters. Well, all these, besides my papa, were always about grandpapa, and he never wanted amusement or waiting on. Since that dreadful time he has had only me; and now, in his old age,

when he has no strength and nothing to do, he is going to be all alone! Oh, madam, I think it is wicked to leave him! Had any body ever a clearer duty than I have—to stay with him?"

"You would be quite right if it was any body but himself that desired you to leave him. Your first duty, my dear, is to obey his wishes."

"I shall never be able to learn my lessons for thinking of him, sitting alone there—or perhaps lying in bed, because there is nothing to get up for."

"Now you are presumptuous. You are counting upon what may never happen, and fearing to leave your parent in the hand of Him who gave you to him. Suppose you were to die to-night, I fear you could not trust him in the hands of Him who wraps us round with old age before taking us home to himself."

"Oh yes, I could so trust him to-night if I myself had watched him to sleep. But a month hence, if I were to die, I should dread to meet my parents. They would ask me, 'How is our father?' and I should have to answer, 'I do not know—I have left him—I have done nothing for him of late.' The whole time that I am here, madame, I shall be afraid to die and meet my mother."

"We must lead you to doubt your own notions, and to trust more in God," said the lady, gently. "We know not what a day may bring forth; and as you grow older, you will find how, in cases of hard and doubtful duty, our way becomes suddenly clear, so as to make us ashamed of our late anguish. Father Gabriel will tell you that one night he lost his way among the marshes in the plain. The clouds hung thick and low overhead, and there was not a ray of light. He plunged on the one hand into the marsh; and on the other the reeds grew higher than his head. Behind him was a wood that he had hardly managed to struggle through; and he knew not what might be before him. He groped about for a firm place to stand on, and had no idea which way to move. At last, without his having felt a breath of wind, he found that the clouds had parted to the right, making a chink through which he saw the Cibao peaks standing up against a starlight sky; and to the left there was on the horizon a dim white line which he could not understand, till the crescent moon dropped down from behind the cloudy canopy, across a bar of clear sky, and into the sea. This made him look whether the church of St. Hilaire was not close by. He made out its dim mass through the darkness, and in a few minutes stood in the porch. So, my child, is our way (even yours, young as you are) sometimes made too dark for our feeble eyes; and thus, from one quarter or another, is a ray permitted to fall, that we may not be lost."

"Thank you," said Euphrosyne, softly. "May I come to-morrow?"

"At any hour you shall be welcome, my dear."

"If you will appoint me something to do ev-

ery morning in the garden, madam, grandpapa might sit in the balcony to see me and talk to me. That will be a reason for his getting up. That will prevent his lying too long for want of something to do."

"A very good plan. If you love your grandfather so, Euphrosyne, how would you have loved your mother if she had lived?"

"Had you a mother when you were my age?"

"Yes, my dear. But do not let us speak of that. Do you remember your mamma, my dear?"

"Yes, a little. I remember her sitting in a wood—on the ground—with her head bent down upon her knees, and a great many black people about."

"Well, tell me no more. I ought not to have asked you. I was not thinking of that horrid time."

"But I do not mind telling you. I like to speak of it; and I never can to grandpapa—it makes him so ill. Mamma shook so, that I remember putting my arms about her to keep her warm, till I found how burning hot her hands were. My sisters were crying; and they told me not to ask any more why papa did not come to us, for he was dead. I remember being wakened by a noise when I was very sleepy, and seeing some soldiers. One of them lifted me up, and I was frightened, till I saw that they were carrying mamma too. They put us both into a cart. I did not see my sisters; and I believe they were both dead then, of grief and hardship. And mamma never spoke again. She looked as pale as her gown as she lay in the cart with her eyes shut. She was breathing, however, and I thought she was asleep. I felt very sleepy and odd. The soldiers said I was half starved, and they gave me a plantain that they pulled by the road-side. I wanted them to give some to mamma too, but they made me no answer. I put mine into her hand, but she let it fall, and I cried because she would not take any notice. Then one of the soldiers bade me eat my plantain, and I thought I must do as I was bid. I forget where we went next."

"You remember more than I had supposed. Your mother was brought on board the ship where we were, and there she presently died."

"You were on board ship, madam?"

"Yes, all the sisters; for the town was not considered safe even for us."

"And where was—?" Euphrosyne stopped abruptly.

"You were going to ask where my mother was," said the lady. "I feel that I was wrong in stopping you as I did just now, for you might fancy that my mother was in some way to blame. She was a good mother to me—full of kindness—but I did not make her happy."

"You did not?"

"Indeed I did not. I crossed her in the thing she desired most of all—that we should live together. I believed it my duty to become a nun, and I left her. She returned to France,

being a widow, and having no other child; and there she died among distant relations."

"Was she angry with you?"

"She never said or showed that she was.

But I know that she was grieved to the very soul, and for life. This, my dear, has been the greatest affliction I have ever known. I did not feel it so at the time, having no doubt of my vocation; but what I have suffered since from the thought that an only child and only parent, who ought to have made each other happy, were both miserable, God only knows."

"Yet you did what you thought was your duty to God. I wonder whether you were right?"

"If you knew how many times—but," said the lady, interrupting herself, "we shall know all when our hearts are laid open, and I may minister to my mother yet. If I erred, and there be further punishment for my error yet, I am ready to bear it. You see, my child, how much you have to be thankful for, that your difficulty is not from having failed in duty to your parent. For the future, fear not but that your duty will be made clear to you. I am sure this is all you desire."

"Shall we have any more such conversations as this when I come to live here! If we can—"

"We shall see," replied the lady, smiling.

"Father Gabriel says there may easily be too much talk, even about our duties; but occasions may arise."

"I hope so," said Euphrosyne, rising, as she perceived that the lady thought it was time for her to go. "I dare say Pierre is here."

Pierre had been waiting some time.

The abbess sat alone after Euphrosyne was gone, contemplating not the lamp, though her eyes were fixed upon it, but the force of the filial principle in this lonely girl; a force which had constrained her to open the aching wound in her own heart to a mere child. She sat, till called by the hour to prayer, pondering the question how it is that relations designed for duty and peace become the occasions of the bitterest sin and suffering. The mystery was in no degree cleared up when she was called to prayer, which, however, has the blessed power of solving all painful mysteries for the hour.

CHAPTER XXI.

PERPLEXITY SOLVED.

"WHAT is the matter, child? What makes you look so merry?" asked M. Revel, when his eyes opened upon Euphrosyne the next morning.

"Nothing has happened, grandpapa. The only thing is, that I like to do what you wish; and I always will, as long as you live. I will go to the convent to-day. You can send for me at any time when you want me, you know. I am sure the abbess will let me come whenever you send Pierre for me."

"Well, well, do not be in such a hurry. I do not want you to go to-day. Why should you be in such a hurry?"

When the breeze had come to refresh him, and he had had his coffee, M. Revel felt more complacent, and explained what he meant by there being no hurry. Euphrosyne should not leave him till to-morrow, and this day should be spent as she pleased. Whatever she liked to ask to-day should be granted. This indulgence was promised under a tolerable certainty that she would ask nothing unreasonable, that she would not propose a dinner-party of dark-complexioned guests, for instance. There might also be an expectation of what it would be that she would choose. M. Revel was conscious that he did not visit his estate of Le Bosquet, in the plain of Limbé, so often as Euphrosyne would have liked, or as he himself knew to be good for his agent, the cultivators, and his heir-ess. He was aware that if he could have shown any satisfaction in the present order of affairs—any good-will toward the working of the new system, there might have been a chance of old stories dying away—of old grievances being forgotten by the cultivators, in his present acquiescence in their freedom. He could not order the carriage, and say he was going to Le Bosquet; but he had just courage enough to set Euphrosyne free to ask to go. It turned out exactly as he expected.

"We will do what you will, my child, to-day. I feel strong enough to be your humble servant."

"It is a splendid day, grandpapa. It must be charming at Le Bosquet. If I order the carriage now, we can get there before the heat; and we need not come home till the cool of the evening. We will fill the carriage with fruit and flowers for the abbe. May I order the carriage?"

Le Bosquet was only twelve miles off. They arrived when the cultivators were settling to their work after breakfast. It was now, as on every former occasion, a perplexity, an embarrassment to Euphrosyne, that the negroes lost all their gayety, and most of their civility, in the presence of her grandfather. She could hardly wonder, when she witnessed this, at his intolerance of the very mention of the blacks, at his ridicule of all she ever told about them, from her own observation. When she was in any other company, she saw them merry, active, and lavish of their kindness and politeness; and, whenever this occurred, she persuaded herself that she must have been mistaken the last time she and M. Revel were at Le Bosquet, and that they ought to go again soon. The next time they went there was the same gloom, listlessness, and avoidance on the part of the negroes; the same care on her grandfather's that she should not stir a step without the escort of Pierre or the agent. He would not even let her go with Portia, the dairy-woman, to gather eggs; nor with little Sully, to see his baby-brother. She made up her mind that this was

all wrong—that all parties would have been more amiable and happy if there had been the same freedom and confidence that she saw on other estates. Poor girl! she little knew what was in all minds but her own—what recollections of the lash and the stocks, and hunger and imprisonment on the one hand, and of the horrors of that August night on the other. She little knew how generally it was supposed that she owed it to the grandfather whom she loved so much that she was the solitary orphan whom every one pitied.

It was, as Euphrosyne had said, a pleasant day, and all went well. M. Revel would not go out much; but as he sat in the shaded room, looking forth upon the lawn, the agent satisfied him with accounts of the prosperity of the estate, the fine promise of the cacao-walks, and the health and regular conduct of the negroes. Euphrosyne showed herself from time to time, now in the midst of a crowd of children, now with a lapful of eggs, and then with a basket of fruit. In honor of the master and young mistress, the dinner was very superb, and far too long, so that the day had slipped away before Euphrosyne felt at all disposed to return. She was glad the agent was engaged in a deep discussion with his employer when the carriage came round, so that she was able to make one more short circuit in the twilight while they were settling their point.

The gentlemen were talking over the two late proclamations—L'Ouverture's and Hédonville's. The agent wished that Hédonville had never come, rather than that he should have set afloat the elements of mischief contained in his proclamation. M. Revel could not believe that a commissary, sent out for the very purpose of regulating such matters, could have got very far wrong upon them; and, besides, the proclamation had never been issued—never formally issued, the agent said; but it had been circulated from hand to hand of those who were interested in its provisions. Some were, at that moment, preparing to act upon it; and he feared that mischief might come of it yet. It was certain that L'Ouverture knew more about claims to deserted estates, and about the proper regulations as to tillage, than any novice from France could know; and it was no less certain that he was ever more eager to gratify the whites than the blacks. It would have been by far the wisest plan to leave that class of affairs in the hands of the person who understood them best; and, if he was not much mistaken, the Government at home would yet rue Hédonville's rashness in acting without so much as consulting L'Ouverture. M. Revel was so amazed at finding that L'Ouverture was not only worshiped by romantic young ladies and freed negroes, but approved and confided in by such practical and interested whites as his own agent, that he could only say again what he said every day, that the world was turned upside down, and that he expected to be stripped, before he died, of Le Bosquet, and of every

thing else that he had, so that his poor child would be left dependent on the charity of France. To this the agent replied, as usual, that the property had never before been so secure, nor the estate so prosperous; and that all would go well, if only the Government at home would employ competent people to write its proclamations.

"Where is this child?" cried M. Revel, at last. "I am always kept waiting by every body. It is dark already, and the carriage has been standing this hour. Where is she?"

"Mademoiselle is in the carriage," said Pierre from the hall. "I made Prince light the lamps, though he thinks we shall not want them."

"Come, come, let us lose no more time," said M. Revel, as if every one had not been waiting for him.

Euphrosyne jumped from the carriage, where she had been packing her basket of eggs, her fruit, and her flowers, so that they might be out of her grandfather's way. He could not admire any of them, and found them all in his way, while the road lay among the dark shadows of the groves on the estate. He cast anxious glances among the tall stems on which the carriage lamps cast a passing gleam. He muttered a surly good-night to the negroes who held open the gates; but, when the last of these swung to—when the carriage issued upon the high-road, and the plain lay, though dim in the starlight, yet free and lovely to the eye—while the line of gray sea was visible to the left, the old man's spirits seemed to rise. It was seldom that he quitted the town; and when he did, and could throw off his cares, he was surprised to find how reviving were the influences of the country.

"It is a lovely night, really," said he. "If you ever go to Paris, my dear, you will miss this starlight. There the stars seem to have shrunk away from you a myriad of miles. Let those flowers be, child. Why may I not have the pleasure of smelling them? There! Let them lie. Who would believe that that sea, which looks so quiet now, will be rolling and dashing upon the beach in November, as if it meant to swallow up the plain? How it seems to sleep in the starlight! You found little Sully grown, my dear, I dare say."

"Oh, yes, but more glad to see us than ever. He had to show me how he could read, and how he had been allowed to put a new leg to the master's desk at school. Sully will make a good carpenter, I think. He is going to make a box for me; and he declares the ants shall never get through it, at the hinge, or lid, or anywhere. How the people are singing all about! I love to hear them. Prince drives so fast that we shall be home too soon. I shall be quite sorry to be in the streets again."

It seemed as if Prince had heard her, for, in another moment, he was certainly checking his horses, and their speed gradually relaxed.

"He must have driven us fast indeed," said

M. Revel. "Look at the lights of the town, how near they are! Are those the lights of the town?"

"I should have looked for them more to the left," Euphrosyne replied. "Let us ask Pierre. We can not possibly have lost our way."

Pierre rode up to the carriage window at the moment that Prince came to a full stop.

"We do not know," said Louis, the black footman, who was beside Prince, "we do not know what those lights can mean. They seem to be moving, and toward this way."

"I think it is a body of people," said Pierre. "I fear so, sir."

"We had better go back," said Euphrosyne. "Let us go back to Le Bosquet."

"Forward! Forward!" cried M. Revel, like one frantic. "Why do you stand still, you rascal? I will drive myself if you do not push on. Drive on—drive like the devil—like what you all are," he added, in a lower tone.

"Surely we had better go back to Le Bosquet."

"No, no, you little fool," cried the agonized old man, grasping hold of her, and dragging her toward himself.

Louis shouted from the box, as Prince lashed his horses onward, "We shall be in the midst of them, sir, this way."

"Drive on," was still the command. "Drive through every thing to get home!" As he clasped his arms round Euphrosyne, and pressed her so closely that she could scarcely breathe, heaping his cloak upon her head, she heard and felt him murmuring to himself,

"To Le Bosquet! No, indeed, anywhere but there! Once at home—she once safe—and then—"

Euphrosyne would have been glad to see a little of what appeared—to know something of what to expect. Once or twice she struggled to raise her head, but this only made the convulsive clasp closer than before. All she knew was, that Pierre or the men on the box seemed to speak from time to time; for the passionate "Drive on!" "Forward!" was repeated. She also fancied that they must be at last in the midst of a crowd; for the motion of the carriage seemed to be interrupted by a sort of hstling on either side. Her heart beat so tumultuously, however, and the sense of suffocation was so strong, that she was sure of nothing but that she felt as if dying. Once more she struggled for air. At the same moment, her grandfather started—almost bounded from his seat, and relaxed his hold of her. She thought she had heard fire-arms. She raised her head, but all was confusion. There was smoke—there was the glare of torches—there was a multitude of shining black faces, and her grandfather lying back, as if asleep, in the corner of the carriage.

"Drive on!" she heard Pierre cry. The whip cracked, the horses plunged and scrambled, and in another moment broke through the crowd. The yelling, the lights, the smoke were

left behind—the air blew in fresh—and there was only calm starlight without, as before.

The old man's hand fell when lifted. He did not move when she stroked his cheek. He did not answer when she spoke. She put her hand to his forehead, and it was wet.

"Pierre! Pierre!" she cried, "he is shot! he is dead!"

"I feared so, mademoiselle. Drive on, Prince!"

In an inconceivably short time they were at their own door. Pierre looked into the carriage, felt his master's wrist and heart, spoke softly to Prince, and they drove on again—only past the corner—only to the gate of the convent.

When it was opened, Pierre appeared at the carriage door. "Now, mademoiselle," he said. He half pulled, half lifted her over the crushed fruit and flowers that were in her way; glanced in her face, to see whether she had observed that the body fell behind her; carried her in, and gave her, passive and stupefied, into the arms of two nuns. Seeing the abbess standing behind, he took off his hat, and would have said something; but his lips quivered, and he could not.

"I will," said the lady's gentle voice, answering in his thought. "My young daughter shall be cherished here."

CHAPTER XXII.

A LOVER'S LOVE.

THIS new violence had for its object the few whites who were rash and weak enough to insist on the terms of Hédoouville's intended proclamation, instead of abiding by that of L'Ouverture. The cultivators on the estates of these whites left work rather than be reduced to a condition of virtual slavery. Wandering from plantation to plantation, idle and discontented, they drew to themselves others, who, from any cause, were also idle and discontented. They exasperated each other with tales, old and new, of the tyranny of the whites. Still, further mischief might have been prevented by due vigilance and firmness on the part of him in whose charge the town and district of Cap Français now lay. Stories, however, passed from mouth to mouth respecting General Moysé; anecdotes of the words he had dropped in dislike of the whites—of the prophecies he had uttered of more violence before the old masters would be taught their new place. Rumors like these spread, till the gathering mob at length turned their faces toward the town, as if to try how far they might go. They went as far as the gates, having murdered some few of the obnoxious masters, either in their own houses, or, as in the case of M. Revel, where they happened to meet them.

On the Haut-du-Cap they encountered General Moysé coming out against them with sol-

diery. At first he looked fierce, and the insurgents began to think each of getting away as he best might. But in a few moments, no one seemed to know how or why the aspect of affairs changed. There was an air of irresolution about the commander. It was plain that he was not really disposed to be severe—that he had no deadly intentions toward those he came to meet. His black troops caught his mood. Some of the inhabitants of the town, who were on the watch with glasses from the gates, from the churches, and from the roofs of houses, afterward testified to there having been a shaking of hands and other amicable gestures. They testified that the insurgents crowded round General Moysé, and gave at one time cheers, at another time groans, evidently on a signal from him. No prisoners were made—there was not a shot fired. The general and his soldiers returned into the town, and even into their quarters, protesting that no further mischief would happen; but the insurgents remained on the heights till daylight; and the inhabitants, feeling themselves wholly unprotected, sent off expresses to the commander-in-chief, and watched, with arms loaded, till he, or one of his more trustworthy generals, should arrive. These expresses were stopped and turned back by order of General Moysé, who ridiculed the idea of further danger, and required the inhabitants to be satisfied with his assurances of protection. Fortunately, however, one or two messengers, who had been sent off a few hours before, on the first alarm, had reached their destination while General Moysé was yet on the Haut-du-Cap.

The first relief to the anxious watchers was on seeing the heights gradually cleared at sunrise. The next was the news that L'Ouverture was entering the town, followed by the ring-leaders from Limbé, whom he was bringing in as prisoners. He had proceeded directly to the scene of insurrection, where the leaders of the mob were delivered up to him at his first bidding. It now remained to be seen what he would do with those within the town, high or low, in office, who were regarded by the inhabitants as accessories.

This kind of speculation was not abated by the sight of L'Ouverture as he passed through the streets. Grave as his countenance usually was, and at times melancholy, never had it been seen so mournful as to-day. Years seemed to have sunk down upon him since he was last seen—so lately, that the youngest prattler in Cap had not ceased to talk of the day. As he walked his horse through the streets, many citizens approached, some humbly to ask, others eagerly to offer, information. With all these last he made appointments and rode on. His way lay past M. Revel's door; and it happened to be at the very time that the funeral (an affair of hurry in that climate) was about to take place. At the sight L'Ouverture stopped opposite the door. When the coffin was brought out, he took off his hat, and remained uncov-

ered till it moved on, when he turned his horse, and followed the train to the corner of the street. There were many present who saw his face, and by whom its expression of deep sorrow was never afterward forgotten. When he again turned in the direction of the Government-house, he proceeded at a rapid pace, as if his purposes had been quickened by the sight.

His aids, who had been dispersed on different errands, entered the town by its various avenues; and some of them joined him in the Jesuits' Walk. At the gate of the Government-house he was received by General Moyses, who had been almost the last person in Cap to hear of his arrival. L'Ouverture acknowledged his military greeting; and then, turning to his aids, said in a calm tone, which yet was heard half-way down the Walk, and thence propagated through the town, as if by echoes,

"General Moyses is under arrest."

As Moyses was moving off toward the apartment in which he was to be guarded, he requested an interview with the commander-in-chief.

"After your business with the court-martial is concluded," was the reply. "On no account before."

General Moyses bowed, and proceeded to his apartment.

For some hours after, there was every indication of the rapid transaction of business in the Government-house. Messengers were sent to Fort Dauphin, to the commanding officer at Limbé, and to every military station within thirty miles. Orders were issued for the garrison of Cap to be kept close within their quarters. Not a man was to be allowed, on any pretense whatever, to pass the barrack-gates, which were well guarded by the commander-in-chief's own guards, till troops for the service of the town could arrive from Fort Dauphin. As L'Ouverture was closeted with his secretary, message after message was reported; letter upon letter was delivered by his usher. Among these messages came at length one which made him start.

"Mâdemoiselle L'Ouverture begs to be permitted to see General Moyses."

Before he could reply, a note by another messenger was put into his hands.

"I implore you to let me see Moyses. I do not ask to see you. I do not wish it. I will disturb no one. Only give me an order to see Moyses—for his sake, and that of your unhappy
"GÉNIFRÈDE."

Toussaint left the room, and was but too well directed by the countenances of his servants to the room where Génifrède was lying, with her face hidden upon a sofa. Denis was standing, silent, at a window which overlooked the Walk. Both were covered with dust from their journey.

Génifrède looked up on hearing some one enter. When she saw that it was her father,

she again buried her face in the cushions, saying only,

"Oh, why did you come?"

"Nay, my child, why did you come? How—why—"

"I always know," said she, "when misery is near; and where misery is, there am I. Do not be angry with Denis, father. I made him come."

"I am angry with no one, Génifrède. I am too much grieved to be angry. I am come to take you to Moyses. I can not see him myself at present; but I will take you to the door of the salon where he is."

"The salon!" said Génifrède, as if relieved. She had probably imagined him chained in a cell. This one word appeared to alter the course of her ideas. She glanced at her travel-soiled dress, and hesitated. Her father said,

"I will send a servant to you. Refresh yourself; and in half an hour I will come again."

When he rejoined her, she was still haggard and agitated, but appeared far less wretched than before.

"Génifrède!" cried Moyses, as she entered, and leaned against the wall, unable to go farther. "Génifrède! And was not that your father who admitted you? Oh, call him Génifrède! Call him back! I must see him. If you ask him, he will come. Call him back, Génifrède!"

"If you are engaged, Moyses," said she, in a sickening voice, "if I am in your way, I will go."

"No, no, my love. But I must see your father. Every thing may depend upon it."

"I will go as soon as I can," said the poor girl, beginning to sink to the floor.

"You shall not go, my love—my Génifrède," cried Moyses, supporting her to a sofa. "I did not know—I little thought—Are you all here?"

"No. I came to see you, Moyses. I told you how it would be if we parted."

"And how will it be, love?"

"Oh, how can you make me say it? How can you make me think it?"

"Why, Génifrède, you can not suppose any thing very serious will happen. What frightens you so? Once more, I ask you the old question that we must both be weary of—what frightens you so?"

"What frightens me!" she repeated, with a bewildered look in his face. "Were we not to have been married as soon as you were relieved from your command here? And are you not a prisoner, waiting for trial; and that trial for—for—your life?"

"Never believe so, Génifrède! Have they not told you that the poor blacks behaved perfectly well from the moment they met me? They did not do a single act of violence after I went to them. Not a hand was raised when they had once seen me; and, after I had put them into good-humor, they all went to their homes."

"Oh, is it so? Is it really so? But you said just now that every thing depended on your seeing my father."

"To a soldier, his honor, his professional standing, are every thing—"

Seeing a painful expression in Génifrède's face, he explained that even his private happiness, the prosperity of his love, depended on his professional honor and standing. She must be as well aware as himself that he was now wholly at her father's mercy as regarded all his prospects in life; and that this would justify any eagerness to see him.

"At his mercy?" repeated Génifrède; "and he is merciful. He does acts of mercy every day."

"True, true. You see now you were too much alarmed."

"But, Moysé, how came you to need his mercy? But two days ago how proud he was of you! and now—oh! Moysé, when you knew what depended on these few days, how could you fail?"

"How was it that he put me into an office that I was not fit for? He should have seen—"

"Then let us leave him, and all these affairs which make us so miserable. Let us go to your father. He will let us live at St. Domingo in peace."

Moysé shook his head, saying that there were more whites at St. Domingo than in any part of the island; and the plain truth was, he could not live where there were whites.

"How was it, then, that you pleased my father so much when Hédoouville went away? He whispered to me, in the piazza at Pongaudin, that, next to himself, you saved the town; that many whites owed their lives and their fortunes to you."

"I repent," cried Moysé, bitterly, "I repent of my deeds of that day. I repent that any white ever owed me gratitude. I thank God; I have shaken them off, like the dust from my feet. Thank God! the whites are all cursing me now!"

"What do you mean? How was it all?" cried Génifrède, fearfully.

"When Hédoouville went away, my first desire was to distinguish myself, that I might gain you, as your father promised. This prospect, so near and so bright, dazzled me so that I could not see black faces from white. For the hour, one passion put the other out."

"And when—how soon did you begin to forget me?" asked Génifrède, sorrowfully.

"I have never forgotten you, love; not for an hour, in the church among the priests, in the square among the soldiers, any more than here as a prisoner. But I thought my point was gained when your father stooped from his horse as he rode away, and told me there would be joy at home on hearing of my charge. I doubted no more that all was safe. Then I heard of the insufferable insolence of some of the whites out at Limbé, acting as if Hédoouville was still here to countenance them. I saw ex-

ultation on account of this in all the white faces I met in Cap. The poor old wretch Revel, when my officers and I met his carriage, stared at me through his spectacles, and laughed in my face as if—"

"Was his grandchild with him? She was? Then he was laughing at some of her prattle. Nothing else made him even smile."

"It looked as if he was ridiculing me and my function. I was growing more angry every hour, when tidings came of the rising out at Limbé. I knew it was forced on by the whites. I knew the mischief was begun by Hédoouville, and kept up by his countrymen; and was it to be expected that I should draw the sword for them against our own people? Could I have done so, Génifrède?"

"Would not my father have restored peace without drawing the sword at all?"

"That was what I did. I went out to meet the insurgents; and the moment they saw that the whites were not to have their own way, they returned to quietness and to their homes. Not another blow was struck."

"And the murderers—what did you do with them?"

Moysé was silent for a moment, and then replied:

"Those may deal with them who desire to live side by side with whites. As for me, I quarrel with none who avenge our centuries of wrong."

"Would to God my father had known that this was in your heart! You would not then have been a wretched prisoner here. Moysé, the moment you are free, let us fly to the mornes. I told you how it would be if we parted. You will do as I wish henceforward—you will take me to the mornes?"

"My love, where and how should we live there? In a cave of the rocks, or roosting in trees?"

"People do live there; not now, perhaps, under my father's government: but in the old days, runaways did live there."

"So you would institute a new race of banditti under your father's reign! How well it will sound in the First Consul's council-chamber, that the eldest daughter of the ambitious commander-in-chief is the first bandit's wife in the mornes!"

"Let them say what they will—we must have peace, Moysé. We have been wretched too long. Oh, if we could once be up there, hidden among the rocks, or sitting among the ferns in the highest of those valleys, with the very clouds between us and this weary world below, never to see a white face more! then, at last, we could be at peace. Everywhere else we are beset with this enemy. They are in the streets, in the churches, on the plain. We meet them in the shade of the woods, and have to pass them basking on the sea-shore. There is no peace but high up in the mornes, too high for the wild beast, and the reptile, and the white man."

"The white man mounts as high as the ea-

gle's nest, Génifrède. You will not be safe, even there, from the traveler or the philosopher, climbing to measure the mountain or observe the stars. But, while we are talking of the free and breezy heights—"

"You are a prisoner," said Génifrède, mournfully. "But soon, very soon we can go. Why do you look so? You said there was no fear; that nothing serious could happen—nothing more than disgrace; and for each other's sake we can defy disgrace. Can we not, Moïse? Why do not you speak?"

"Disgrace, or death, or any thing. Even death, Génifrède. Yes, I said what was not true. They will not let me out but to my death. Do not shudder so, my love: they shall not part us. They shall not rob me of every thing. You did well to come, love. If they had detained you, and I had had to die with such a last thought as that you remained to be comforted, sooner or later, by another—to be made to forget me by a more prosperous lover—oh God! I should have been mad!"

"You are mad, Moïse," cried Génifrède, shrinking from him in terror. "I do not believe a word you say. I love another! they kill you! It is all false! I will not hear another word; I will go."

To go was, however, beyond her power. As she sank down again, trembling, Moïse said, in the imperious tone which she both loved and feared,

"I am speaking the truth now. I shall be tried to-night before a court-martial, which will embody your father's opinion and will. They will find me a traitor, and doom me to death upon the Place. I must die—but not on the Place—and you shall die with me. In one moment we shall be beyond their power. You hear me, Génifrède? I know you hear me, though you do not speak. I can direct you to one, near at hand, who prepares the red water, and knows me well. I will give you an order for red water enough for us both. You will come—your father will not refuse our joint request—you will come to me as soon as the trial is over; and then, love, we will never be parted more."

Génifrède sat long with her face hidden on her lover's shoulder, speechless. After repeated entreaties that she would say one word, Moïse raised her up, and, looking in her face, said authoritatively,

"You will do as I say, Génifrède?"

"Moïse, I dare not. No, no, I dare not! If, when we are dead, you should be dead to me too! And how do we know? If, the very next moment, I should only see your dead body with my own; if you should be snatched away somewhere, and I should be alone in some wide place; if I should be doomed to wander in some dreadful region, calling upon you forever, and no answer! Oh! Moïse, we do not know what fearful things are beyond. I dare not—no, no, I dare not! Do not be angry with me, Moïse!"

"I thought you had been ready to live and die with me."

"And so I am, ready to live anywhere, anyhow; ready to die, if only we could be sure—Oh! if you could only tell me there is nothing beyond—"

"I have little doubt," said Moïse, "that death is really what it is to our eyes—an end of every thing."

"Do you think so? If you could only assure me of that— But if you were really quite certain of that, would you wish me to die too?"

"Wish it! You must—you shall," cried he, passionately. "You are mine—mine forever—and I will not let you go. Do not you see, do not you feel," he said, moderating his tone, "that you will die a slow death of anguish, pining away, from the moment that cursed firing in the Place strikes upon your ear? You can not live without love—you know you can not; and you shall not live by any other love than mine. This little sign," said he, producing a small carved ivory ring from his pocket-book, "this little sign will save you from the anguish of a thousand sleepless nights, from the wretchedness of a thousand days of despair. Take it. If shown at No. 9, in the Rue Espagnole, in my name, you will receive what will suffice for us both. Take it, Génifrède."

She took the ring, but it presently dropped from her powerless hands.

"You do not care for me," said Moïse, bitterly. "You are like all women. You love in fair weather, and would have us give up every thing for you; and, when the hurricane comes, you will fly to shelter, and shut out your lover into the storm."

Génifrède was too wretched to remind her lover what was the character of his love. It did not, indeed, occur to her. She spoke, however:

"If you had remembered, Moïse, what a coward I am, you would have done differently, and not have made me so wretched as I now am. Why did you not bid me bring the red water, without saying what it was, and what for? If you had put it to my lips—if you had not given me a moment to fancy what is to come afterward, I would have drunk it—oh! so thankfully! But now—I dare not."

"You are not afraid to live without me."

"Yes I am. I am afraid of living—of dying—of every thing."

"You once asked me about—"

"I remember—about your spirit coming."

"Suppose it should come, angry at your failing me in my last desire."

"Why did you not kill me? You know I should have been thankful. I wish the roof would fall, and bury us now."

She started and shrieked when she heard some one at the door. It was her father's servant, who told her that Madame Dessalines had arrived, and that L'Ouverture wished her

to come and receive her friend. The servant held the door open, so that there was opportunity only for another word.

"Remember," said Moyses, "they are not to seduce or force you back to Pongaudin to-day. Remember, you are not fit to travel. Remember," he again said, holding up the ivory ring, and then thrusting it into her bosom, "you come to me as soon as the trial is over. I depend upon you."

He led her, passive and silent, to the door, where he kissed her hand, saying, for the ear of any one who might be without, "For once, I can not accompany you farther. Tell Madame Dessalines that I hope to pay my respects to her soon." He added, to the servant,

"See that Julien is at Mademoiselle L'Ouverture's orders till I need his services myself."

The man bowed, pleased, as most persons are, to have a commission to discharge for a prisoner. Before he had closed the door Génifrède was in the arms of Thérèse.

CHAPTER XXIII.

PANGS OF OFFICE.

THAT night Madame Dessalines was alone in a dimly-lighted apartment of the Government-house—dimly-lighted except by the moon, shining in full at the range of windows which overlooked the gardens, so as to make the one lamp upon the table appear like a yellow taper. For most of the long hours that she had sat there, Thérèse had been alone. Denis had entered, before his departure homeward, to ask what tidings he was to carry to Pongaudin from her. Father Laxabon had twice appeared, to know if he could not yet see Génifrède, to offer her consolation; and had withdrawn when he found that Génifrède was not yet awake. Madame Dessalines's maid had put her head in so often as to give her mistress the idea that she was afraid to remain anywhere else; though it did not quite suit her to be where she must speak as little as possible, and that little only in whispers. So Thérèse had been, for the most part, alone since sunset. Her work was on the table, and she occasionally took up her needle for a few minutes, but it was laid down at the slightest noise without; and again and again she rose, either to listen at the chamber door which opened into the apartment, or softly to pace the floor, or to step out upon the balcony to refresh herself with looking down upon the calm lights and still shadows of the garden.

In the centre of one division of these gardens was a fountain, whose waters, after springing in the air, fell into a wide and deep reservoir, from whence were supplied the trenches which kept the alleys green and fresh in all but the very hottest weeks of the year. Four straight walks met at this fountain—walks edged in with fences of citron, geraniums, and lilac jasmine. These walks were now deserted. Ev-

ery one in the house and in the town was occupied with something far different from moonlight strolls for pleasure or for meditation. The checkered lights and shadows lay undisturbed by the foot of any intruder. The waters gleamed as they rose, and sparkled as they fell; and no human voice, in discourse or in laughter, mingled with the murmur and the splash. Here Thérèse permitted herself the indulgence of the tears which she had made an effort to conceal within.

"These young creatures!" thought she. "What a lot! They are to be parted—wrenched asunder by death—by the same cause, for indulgence of the same passion, which brought Jacques and me together. If the same priest were to receive their confession and ours, how would he reconcile the ways of God to them and to us? The thought of my child burns at my heart, and its last struggle—my bosom is quivering with it still. For this Jacques took me to his heart, and I have ever since had—alas! not forgetfulness of my child—but a home, and the good fame that a woman can not live without, and the love of a brave and tender heart—tender to me, however hard to those we hate. Jacques lives in honor and in a station of command, though he hates the whites with a passion which would startle Moyses himself; hates them so that he does not even strive, as I do, to remember that they are human—to be ready to give them the cup of cold water when they thirst, and the word of sympathy when they grieve. He would rather dash the cup from their parched lips, and laugh at their woes. Yet Jacques lives in peace and honor at his palace at St. Marc, or is, in war, at the head of troops that would die for him; while this poor young man, a mere novice in the passion, is too likely to be cast out as unworthy to live among us—among us who, God knows, are in this regard more guilty than he! The time may come, when Génifrède's first passion is over, when I may tell her this. Hark! that trumpet! The court-martial has broken up. Oh! I wish I could silence that trumpet? It will waken her. It is farther off—and farther. God grant she may not have heard it!"

She stepped in, and to the chamber door, and listened. There was no stir, and she said to herself that her medicine had wrought well. From the window, which opened on one of the court-yards, she heard the shuffling of feet and the passing by of many persons. She dared not look out; but she felt certain that the trial was over, that the officers were proceeding to their quarters, and the prisoner to his solitude. Her heart beat so that she was glad to return to her seat, and cover her eyes from the light. She was startled by the opening of the door from the corridor. It was L'Ouverture; and she rose, as every one habitually did, at his approach.

"Génifrède?" he said, anxiously, as he approached.

Thérèse pointed to the chamber, saying softly,

"She is there. I do not know what you will think of the means I have taken to procure her sleep. But she was so shaken—she so dreaded this night!"

"You have given her medicine. Is she asleep?"

"I gave her henbane, and she is asleep."

"Is there a chance of her sleeping till noon?"

"If she be not disturbed. I have carefully darkened the room. What has been done?" she inquired, looking in his face. Struck with its expression, she exclaimed, "How you have suffered!"

"Yes. Life is bitter to those whom God has chosen. If Moyses did but know it, I almost envy him his rest."

"Is it over, then? Is he dead?"

"He dies at sunrise. You think Génifrède may sleep till noon?"

Thérèse could not reply, and he proceeded:

"He is found guilty, and sentenced. There was no escape. His guilt is clear as noonday."

"No escape from the sentence," said Thérèse, eagerly. "But there is room for mercy yet. You hold the power of life and death over all the colony; a power like that of God, and put into your hand by Him."

"A power put into my hand by Him, and therefore to be justly used. Moyses's crime is great; and mercy to him would be a crime in me. I have fault enough already to answer for in this business; and I dare not sin yet further."

"You yourself have sinned?" said Thérèse, with a gleam of hope in her countenance and tone.

"Yes. I ought to have discerned the weakness of this young man. I ought to have detected the passions that were working in him. I was misled by one great and prolonged effort of self-control in him. I appointed an unworthy officer to the care of the lives and safety of the whites. Many of them are gone to lay their deaths to my charge in heaven. All I can now do is, by one more death (would to God it were my own!), to save and to re-assure those who are left. It is my retribution that Moyses must die. As for Paul, as for Génifrède, the sin of the brother is visited upon the brother, the sin of the father upon the child."

"But," said Thérèse, "you speak as if you had caused the innocent to be destroyed. Some few harmless ones may have died; but the greater number—those who were sought by the sword's point—were factious tyrants—enemies of your Government and of your race—men who rashly brought their deaths upon themselves. They were passionate—they were stubborn—they were cruel."

"True, and therefore were they peculiarly under my charge. I have guaranteed the safety of the whites; and none need my protection so much as those who do not, by justice, obedience, and gentleness, by gaining the good-will of their neighbors, protect themselves."

"But Moyses did not murder any. He was not even present at any death."

"It has just been proved that, while he knew that slaughter was going on, he took no measures to stop it. The ground of his guilt is plain and clear. The law of the Revolution of St. Domingo, as conducted by me, is *NO RETALIATION*. Every breach of this law by an officer of mine is treason; and every traitor to the whites must die."

"Alas! why so harsh now—only now? You have spared the guilty before, by tens, by hundreds. Why now cause all this misery for this one young life?"

"Those whom I have spared were my personal foes; and I spared them not so much for the sake of their separate lives, as for the sake of the great principles for which I live and govern—reconciliation and peace. For this end I pardoned them. For this end I condemn Moyses."

"You make one tremble," said Thérèse, shuddering, "for one's very self. What if I were to tell you that it is not Moyses and Génifrède alone that—" She stopped.

"That hate the whites? I know it," replied Toussaint. "I know that if God were to smite all among us who hate his children of another race, there would be mourning in some of the brightest dwellings of our land. I thank God that no commission to smite such is given to me."

Thérèse was silent.

"My office is," said Toussaint, "to honor those (and they are to be found in cottages all through the island) who forgive their former oppressors and forget their own wrongs. Here, as elsewhere, we may take our highest lesson from the lowliest men. My office is to honor such. As for the powerful, and those who think themselves wise, their secret feelings toward all men are between themselves and God."

"But if I could prove to you, at this moment, that Moyses's enmity toward the whites is mild and harmless—his passions moderation, compared with the tempest in the breasts of some whom you employ and cherish—would not this soften you? would it not hold your hand from inflicting that which no priest can deny is injustice in God?"

"I leave it to no priest, Thérèse, but to God himself, to vindicate his own justice, by working as he will in the secret hearts or before the eyes of men. He may have, for those who hate their enemies, punishments too great for me or any ruler to wield—punishments to which the prison and the bullet are nothing. You speak of the tempest within the breast: I know at this moment, if you do not, that years of imprisonment, or a hundred death-strokes, are mercy compared to it. But no more of this? I only say, Thérèse, that while Jacques—"

"Say me too!"

"While Jacques and you secretly hate, I have no concern with it except in my secret heart. But if that hatred, be it more or less than that of this young man, should interfere with my duty to friend or foe, you see, from his

fate, that I have no mercy to grant. Jacques is my friend: Moyses was to have been my son."

Neither could immediately speak. At length Toussaint signed once more to the chamber door, and once more said,

"Génifrède?"

"I have something to tell you—something to show you," replied Thérèse. "Her sleep or stupor came upon her suddenly; but she kept a strong grasp upon the bosom of her dress. When I laid her on the bed, she kept her hands clasped, one upon the other, there. As she slept more heavily, the fingers relaxed, her hands fell, and I saw one end of this."

She produced a phial.

"Ha! the red water!" exclaimed Toussaint.

"I thought it was," said Thérèse.

"Who taught her this? Who has been tampering with her and with her life!"

"Perhaps this may tell," said Thérèse, showing the ivory ring.

Toussaint closely examined the ring, and then drew his hand across his brows.

"How strange," said he, "are old thoughts, long forgotten! This little bit of ivory makes me again a young man and a slave. Do you remember that I once had the care of the sick at Breda, and administered medicines?"

Thérèse shuddered. She remembered that when her infant was taken ill, Papalier had sent for Toussaint, because, though Toussaint was no longer surgeon to the quarter at Breda, he was thought to have great knowledge and skill. Toussaint remembered nothing of this particular incident, and was not aware how he had touched her feelings. He went on:

"I began that study as all of my race have begun it till of late—in superstition. With what awe did I handle charms like this! Can it be possible that my poor child has been wrought upon by such jugglery? What do you know about it?"

"No more than that the charm and the poison were hidden in her bosom."

"It is hard to trouble a dying man," said Toussaint; "but the survivor must be cared for. If Moyses has poisoned her mind, as I much fear he would have poisoned her body—But no—it is an atrocious thought. If I wrong him—if his love for her is faithful, he will be glad to tell me what he knows, that her sick mind may be well tended. Father Laxabon is coming presently to go to Moyses, and leave him no more. I will go with him."

"How you suffer! How you must suffer!" said Thérèse, again speaking her thoughts as she looked in his face.

"It is worse than going to my death," replied he; "but for my child's sake—for my poor brother's sake too, it must be done."

He could say no more. Till Father Laxabon came, he paced the room—he listened at the chamber door—he went out upon the balcony to hide, as Thérèse well understood, his tears of agony. He again entered, listened

again at the chamber door, and, hastily approaching the table, took up the phial, saying,

"Are you certain that this is all? Are you certain that she only sleeps, and is not dying—or dead?"

"Indeed I am not certain," exclaimed Thérèse, starting up, and softly entering the chamber. Toussaint followed with the lamp, shading it carefully with his hand.

"Here is no pain," whispered Thérèse. "She breathes quietly. There is no pain. Satisfy yourself."

She took the light from his hand, and saw him stoop above the sleeping child, extending his hands over her as if in the act of prayer or blessing.

"No pain, thank God!" he repeated as they returned to the salon, where they found Father Laxabon.

"Are you prepared, father, to deal with a spirit as perturbed as that of the dead who can not rest?"

"Christ will strengthen me for my office, my son."

"And the other sufferers?"

"My brethren are engaged with them. Every man of the black troops will be shriven this night."

"Are there more doomed!" asked Thérèse, faintly.

"There are. There are many guilty; and of some I must make an example. They know that they are guilty; but they know not yet which and how many are to be spared. The discipline of this night will, I trust, impress upon them that principle of our revolution which they have hitherto failed to learn, or have been tempted to forget. This night, father, will establish your precept and mine, and that of our Master—NO RETALIATION. If not, may God direct us, by whatever suffering, to some other method of teaching it; for, at whatever cost, it must be learned! Let us be gone."

"One moment," exclaimed Thérèse, in agitation. "You have not told me when—where—"

"He dies on the Place, at sunrise—a military, not an ignominious death. Father Laxabon and I shall both be near at hand when Génifrède wakes. Your task shall be shared, though we must leave you now."

Moyses had been permitted to remain in the same apartment which had been assigned to him after his arrest. When he heard the key turn in the lock, he sprang from his seat to the door, exclaiming,

"You have come at last! Oh, Génifrède! to have kept me waiting this last night—"

He turned and walked back to his seat when he saw his uncle and the priest.

"You expected Génifrède?" asked Toussaint.

"I did—naturally."

"She is asleep, and she must not be awakened. You would be the last to wish it, Moyses."

"Must not be awakened," repeated Toussaint to himself, with something of doubt in his tone, something of triumph in his countenance.

"Perhaps you think," said Toussaint, fixing his eyes on the young man's face, "that she can not be awakened. Perhaps you think that she has drunk the red water?"

"She has told, then. A curse upon woman's cowardice and woman's treachery! Who would not have sworn that, if ever a woman loved, Génifrède loved me; and now, when put to the test—"

"Now, when put to the test," said Toussaint, "my poor child was prepared to die with you, though you had perplexed her mind with superstition—terrified her with spells and charms—"

"You do not know her, uncle. She herself told me that she dared not die with me, though it was the only—"

"And you wished it—you required it? You have striven to destroy her, body and soul, because you yourself were lost; and now you curse a woman's cowardice and treachery! I leave you with Father Laxabon. Hasten to confess and cleanse your soul, Moyse, for never soul needed it more. I leave you my pity and my forgiveness; and I engage for Génifrède's."

"Stop!" cried Moyse; "I have something to ask. Who has dared to keep Génifrède from me? She is mine."

"Think of her no more, except to implore Heaven's pardon for your intent toward her." And Toussaint produced the ivory ring and phial.

"Yes," exclaimed Moyse; "with that ring we obtained that water, which we were to have drunk together."

"Here, then, I break the bond by which she was yours." And Toussaint crushed the ring to dust with the heel of his boot, and dashed the phial against the ceiling, from whence the poisonous water sprinkled the floor.

"You spoke of treachery just now," said Moyse. "How do you propose to answer to my father for the charge he left you in me?"

"Be silent, my poor son," said Father Laxabon. "Do not spend your remaining moments in aggravating your crimes."

"A few minutes' patience, father. I never before ventured to speak freely to my uncle. Not on account of any severity of his—he never was severe to me—but on account of a certain awe I felt in him; an awe which the events of this day have had a wonderful power to dispel."

"It is well," said Toussaint. "There should be no awe of the creature when but a moment's darkness separates one from the Creator. Speak freely and fearlessly, Moyse."

"I ask," said Moyse, in a somewhat softened tone, "how you will answer to my father for the charge he left you in me?"

"Not by revealing to him the vices of the spirit he gave me to guide. If your father's heart must be broken for you, it shall be for having thus lost a noble and gallant son, and not for— But it is no time for reproach from me. Let me go now, my poor boy."

"Not yet, uncle. It is far from sunrise yet. How do you mean to report of me to Génifrède? Will you make her detest me? Will you work upon her fears—her fears of my ghost—to make her seek refuge with another? Will you trample on the memory of the dead, to drive her into the arms of some living lover, that you may no longer be reminded of the poor wretch that you first fostered and then murdered?"

"Leave us!" said Laxabon to Toussaint. "He is desperate. Leave him to me, that he may not plunge deeper into sin with every word he speaks."

"Presently, father. Moyse, what Génifrède hears of you will be according to what Father Laxabon has to report of your last hours. Be assured that I shall not interpose between you and her. It rests with yourself to justify her love and engage her affections to your memory. She has been laid to sleep this night, not out of enmity to you, but to save her brain. As Providence has decreed, it has also saved her life. When she awakes, she will regard you as a martyr to a professional necessity. A woman's love is sanctified and made immortal when baptized in the blood of martyrdom. Hers may be so if your last moments are full of holy contrition and purged from passion. Of Father Laxabon, and not of me, will Génifrède inquire concerning you."

"This is kind—this is generous," said Moyse, looking wistfully in his uncle's face.

"And now," said Toussaint, "I have to ask you to be generous to me. I need and implore your pardon, Moyse. While you were yet weak and wayward, I neglected the necessary watch over you. Too prone to ease and satisfaction for my child's sake and my own, I too soon concluded you a man, and imposed upon you the duties of a man. Your failure is my condemnation. I have cut short your discipline, and enabled you to throw away your life. All this, and much more, am I answerable for. Whether or not God may have mercy, can you yield me your pardon? I implore it, Moyse."

Moyse gazed at him in astonishment, and then cast himself at his uncle's feet, clinging to his knees, and crying,

"Save me! uncle, save me! You can, you will—"

"No Moyse, I will not, I can not," declared Toussaint, in a voice which silenced even that most piercing of all sounds—the cry for life.

"Not one word—" continued L'Ouverture. "Keep your entreaties for Him who alone can help you. Kneel to Him alone. Rise, Moyse, and only say, if you can say it, that your last prayer for me shall be for pardon."

The awe of man was not destroyed in Moyse. He looked humbly upon the ground, as he again stood before his uncle, and said,

"My destruction is my own work, and I have felt this throughout. But if you have ever done me wrong, may it be forgotten before God, as it is by me! I know of no such wrong."

"Thank God!" cried Toussaint, pressing him

to his breast. "This is the temper which will win mercy."

"Leave us now," said Father Laxabon once more; and this time he was obeyed.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ALL EAR.

THERESE was struck with awe as she stood, from time to time, beside the bed on which lay Génifrède. The room was so darkened that nothing was to be seen; but there she lay, breathing calmly, motionless, unconscious, while the blessings and hopes of her young life were falling fast into ruins around her. It seemed treacherous, cruel, thus to beguile her of that tremendous night; to let these last hours of the only life she prized pass away unused; to deprive her of the last glances of those eyes which were presently to be dim in death; of the latest tones of that voice which soon would never speak more. It seemed an irreparable injury to rob her of these hours of intense life, and to substitute for them a blank and barren sleep. But it was done. It was done to save her intellects; it had probably saved her life; and she could not now be wakened to any purpose. With sickening heart Thérèse saw the moonlight disturbed by gray light from the east. In a few minutes the sun would leap up from the sea, to quench not only the gleams of moon and star, but the more sacred lamp of human life. Brief as was always the twilight there, never had the gushing in of light appeared so hasty, so peremptory as now. By the rousing up of the birds, by the stir of the breezes, by the quick unfolding of the flowers, it seemed as if Nature herself had turned against her wretched children, and was impatient till their doom was fulfilled. Thérèse resolved to return no more to the chamber till all should be over, lest light and sound should enter with her, and the sufferer be roused too soon.

As the yellow rays shone in fuller and fuller, the watcher's nerves were so stretched, that, though she wrapped her head in her shawl as she sat, she felt as if the rustle of every leaf, the buzz of every insect wing in the gardens reached her ear. She heard at intervals the tap of a distant drum, and, she was certain, a discharge of fire-arms; not in a volley from the Place d'Armes, as she had expected, but farther off, and mere dropping shot. This occurred so often that she was satisfied it was not the execution; and, while she drew a deep breath, hardly knew whether to feel relieved or not. The door from the corridor presently opened and closed again, before she could throw back the shawl from her face. She flew to the door, to see if any one was there who could give her news. M. Pascal was walking away toward the farther end. When she issued forth, he turned and apologized for having

interrupted her, believing that the salon would be unoccupied at this early hour.

"Tell me—only tell me," said she, "whether it is over."

"Not the principal execution—it is about going forward now. I came away; I saw what melted my soul, and I could endure no more."

"You saw L'Ouverture?" said Madame Des-salines, anxiously.

M. Pascal went back with her into the salon, as glad to relieve his mind as she was eager to hear.

"I saw," said he, "what I never could have conceived of, and would never have believed upon report. I have seen man as a god among his fellow-men."

A gleam of satisfaction lighted up Madame Dessalines's face through its agony.

"It was too touching, too mournful to be endured," resumed M. Pascal. "The countenances of those poor creatures will haunt me to my dying hour. Never was man idolized like L'Ouverture. For him men go willingly to their deaths; not in the excitement of a common danger, not for glory or for a bright future, but solitary, in ignominy, in the light of a calm sunrise, with the eyes of a condemning multitude upon them. Without protest, without supplication—as it appears, without objection—they stoop to death at his word."

"I do not know—I do not understand what has been done," said Thérèse. "But does not every black know that L'Ouverture has no private interests; nothing at heart but the good of us all?"

"That is the spell," replied Pascal. "This sacrifice of his nephew will confirm it with my countrymen, as well as with yours, forever. These thirteen others—for he has sacrificed thirteen of the soldiers for dereliction of duty in the late rising—these thirteen are from the garrison of Cap chiefly, though it is said two or three are from Limbé. All the soldiery from these two places and from Fort Dauphin are upon the Place. L'Ouverture stood in the midst and addressed them. He told them that it was needless to explain to them what they had been learning from his whole course of conduct since he was chosen by the blacks to lead and govern them. It was needless to insist on the protection due to every inhabitant of the colony, and especially the whites; and on the primary duty of a liberated race—that of keeping the peace. They knew their duty as well as he did; and those who had violated it should suffer the long-declared and inevitable punishment of death. All knew that every thing was prepared on the rampart, near at hand. L'Ouverture walked slowly along each line of the soldiery; and I declare to you, madame, that, though all knew that he was selecting victims for instant death, there was passionate love in every face."

"I believe it," said Thérèse. "And he?"

"He was calm; but a face of deeper sorrow

never did I see. He is ten years older since last night. He spoke aloud the names of the most guilty, according to their own previous account of themselves to him and the committee of investigation."

"And no one of the thirteen resisted?"

"Not one. One by one they joined their hands, bowed their heads humbly before him, and repaired where he pointed—to be shot. There was a spell upon me. I could not come away, though feeling at every moment as if I could endure no more. I did not, however, stay to see General Moyses brought out—"

As he was speaking, there was heard the heavy roll of drums at a distance, followed by a volley of musketry.

"That is it," cried M. Pascal; and he was gone. Thérèse sank back upon a sofa, and again drew her shawl over her head. She desired, in the sickness of her heart, never to see the daylight more.

She knew not how long it was before the door was again gently opened. She did not move; but she presently heard Father Laxabon's soft voice saying,

"Pardon, madame; but I am compelled to ask where is Mademoiselle L'Ouverture?"

"She is asleep," said Thérèse, rousing herself; "asleep, if indeed she be not dead. If this last sound did not rouse her, I think the trump of doom will scarcely reach her soul."

This last sound had roused Génifrède. She did not recognize it; she was not aware what had wakened her; but she had started up, supposed it night, but felt so oppressed that she sprang from the bed, with a confused wonder at finding herself dressed, and threw open the door to the salon. There she now stood, bewildered with the sudden light, and looking doubtful whether to advance or go back.

"My daughter—" said Father Laxabon. She came forward with a docile and wistful look. "My daughter," he continued, "I bring you some comfort."

"Comfort?" she repeated, doubtfully.

"Not now, father," interposed Thérèse. "Spare her."

"Spare me?" repeated Génifrède, in the same tone.

"I bring her comfort," said the father, turning reprovingly to Madame Dessalines. "His conflict is over, my daughter," he continued, advancing to Génifrède. "His last moments were composed: and as for his state of mind in confession—"

He was stopped by a shriek so appalling that he recoiled as if shot, and supported himself against the wall. Génifrède rushed back to the chamber, and drove something heavy against the door. Thérèse was there in an instant, listening, and then imploring, in a voice which, it might be thought, no one could resist.

"Let me in, love! It is Thérèse. No one else shall come. If you love me, let me in."

There was no answer.

"You have killed her, I believe," she said to

the priest, who was walking up and down in great disturbance—not with himself, but with the faithless creature of passion he had to deal with.

"The windows!" exclaimed Thérèse, vexed not to have thought of this before. She stepped out upon the balcony. One of the chamber windows was open, and she entered. No one was there. Génifrède must have fled down the steps from the balcony into the gardens; and there Thérèse hastened after her. In one of the fenced walks leading to the fountain she saw the fluttering of her clothes.

"The reservoir!" thought Thérèse, in despair.

She was not mistaken. Génifrède stood on the brink of the deep and brimming reservoir; her hands were clasped above her head for the plunge, when a strong hand seized her arm and drew her irresistibly back. In ungovernable rage she turned and saw her father.

"They say," she screamed, "that every one worships you. Not true now! Never true more! I hate—I curse—"

He held up his right hand with the action of authority which had awed her childhood. It awed her now. Her voice sank into a low shuddering and muttering.

"That any one should have dared to tell you—that any one should have interfered between me and my poor child!" he said, as if involuntarily, while seating her on the fresh grass. He threw himself down beside her, holding her hands, and covering them with kisses.

"This sod is fresh and green," said he; "but would we were all lying under it!"

"Do you say so?" murmured Génifrède.

"God forgive me!" he replied. "But we are all wretched."

"You repent, then?" said Génifrède. "Well you may! There are no more such, now you have killed him. You should have repented sooner: it is too late now."

"I do not repent, Génifrède; but I mourn, my child."

"There are no more such," pursued she.

"He was gallant."

"He was."

"He was all life: there was no deadness, no coldness—he was all life."

"He was, my child."

"And such a lover!" she continued, with somewhat of a strange, proud smile.

"He was a lover, Génifrède, who made your parents proud."

"Such a soldier!" she dreamed on. "War was his sport, while I trembled at home. He had a soldier's heart."

Her father was silent, and she seemed to miss his voice, though she had not appeared conscious of his replies. She started, and sprang to her feet.

"You will go home now, Génifrède," said her father. "With Madame Dessalines you will go. You will go to your mother and sister."

"Home!" she exclaimed, with loathing. "Yes, I must go home," she said, hurriedly. "You love Pongaudin—you call it Paradise. I wish you joy of it now! You have put an evil spirit into it. I wish you joy of your Paradise!"

She disengaged herself from him as she spoke, and walked away. Thérèse, who had drawn back on seeing that she was in her father's care, now intercepted her path, met her, and drew her arm within hers. Toussaint, who was following, retreated for a moment, to ease his agony by a brief prayer for his child, and for guidance and strength. Having acknowledged with humiliation that he found his mission well-nigh too hard for him, and imploring for the wounded in spirit the consolation which he would willingly purchase for his brother and his child by a life of woe for himself, he repaired to his chamber of audience, where, for the rest of the morning, he appeared wholly engrossed by the affairs of the citizens of Cap. The steadiness of his attention to business was felt by his still-agitated secretary as a rebuke to his own wandering thoughts.

CHAPTER XXV.

PERCH OF THE RAVEN.

EUPHROSYNE's life in the convent was dull and weary. It would probably have been so anywhere for some time after the old man's death; but elsewhere there would have been more to do and to amuse herself with. Every one was kind to her—too kind. She had been accustomed to the voice of chiding during all the years that she had lived with her grandfather, and she did not mind it. It would now have been something of a relief, something welcome and familiar, to have been called "child" and "little fool" at times, instead of being told at every turn that she was an angel and a love, and finding that she was every one's pet, from the abbess to old Raphael.

The kindness of the household had begun from the moment the poor girl appeared, after having been consoled by Father Gabriel, and visited by Pierre and the guardian to whose care her grandfather had confided her person and her property. Pierre had engaged to see her daily till the furniture should have been sold, and the house shut up, and he himself about to embark for France with the savings of his long service. Her guardian, M. Critois, knew but little of young people, and how to talk to them. He had assured her that he mourned extremely the loss of his old acquaintance—the acquaintance of so many years—and so lost! He declared his desire of discharging his office of guardian so as to prove himself worthy of the trust, and his hope that he and his ward should be very good friends. At present, it was his wish that she should remain where she was! and he asked whether she did not find every one very kind

to her. Euphrosyne could just say "Yes;" but she was crying too much to be able to add that she hoped she should not have to remain in the convent very long. M. Critois saw that she was struggling to say something; but, after waiting a minute, he stroked her hair, promised to come again some day soon, hoped she would cheer up, had no doubt she would be very happy, and was gone, glad to have done with sobbing girls for this day.

When the gates had closed upon him, the petting began. The abbess decreed that Euphrosyne should have the sole charge of her mocking-bird. Sister Angélique, who made the prettiest artificial flowers in the world, invited her to her apartment at all reasonable hours, when she might have a curiosity to seek to learn the process. Sister Célestine had invented a new kind of confit, which she begged Euphrosyne to try, leaving a paper of sweetmeats on her table for that purpose. Old Raphael had gained leave to clear a parterre in the garden, which was to be wholly hers, and where he would rear such flowers as she particularly admired. Father Gabriel himself, after pointing out to her the uncertainty of life, the sudden surprises of death, and the care with which it becomes social beings to discharge their duties to each other, since they know not how soon they may be parted—the serious Father Gabriel himself recommended her to amuse herself, and to remember how her grandfather had liked to see her gay. She had, no doubt, been a good girl, on the whole; and she could not now do better than continue the conduct which had pleased the departed in the days that were gone.

Petted people generally prove perverse; and so, in the opinion of the universal household, did Euphrosyne. There could be no doubt of her love for her grandfather. One need but see the sudden tears that sprang, twenty times in a day, when any remembrance of him was awakened. One need but watch her wistful looks cast up toward his balcony whenever she was in the garden. Yet, whenever any one expressed indignation against his murderers, she was silent, or she ran away, or she protested against it. Such was the representation which Sister Claire made to her reverend mother on the first opportunity.

"I was not aware that it was exactly so," replied the abbess. "It appears to me that she dislikes to hear any parties made answerable for the murder but those by whose hands it was actually done. She—"

The abbess stopped, and Sister Claire started, at the sound of musketry.

"Another shot!" said the abbess. "It is a fearful execution. I should have been glad to have removed this poor child out of hearing of these shots; but I had no notice of what was to happen till the streets were too full for her to appear in them."

"A piece of L'Ouverture's haste!" said Sister Claire.

"A fresh instance, perhaps, of his wise speed,"

observed the abess. "Events seem to show that he understands the conduct of affairs better than you or I, my daughter."

"Again! Hark! Oh, mercy!" cried Sister Claire, as the sound of a prolonged volley reached them.

"Let us hope it is the last," said the abess, with changing color. "Christ save their sinful souls!"

The door opened, and Euphrosyne entered, in excessive agitation.

"Madame," she cried, gasping for breath, "do you hear that? Do you know what it is? They have shot General Moysé! Father Gabriel says so. Oh no, no! L'Ouverture never would do any thing so cruel."

Sister Claire looked at the abess.

"My daughter," said the abess, "L'Ouverture's duty is to execute justice."

"Oh, Génifrède! Poor, poor Génifrède! She will die too. I hope she is dead!"

"Hush, my child! Her life is in God's hand."

"Oh, how cruel! how cruel!" the girl went on sobbing.

"What would L'Ouverture say," interposed Sister Claire, "if he knew that you, of all people, called him cruel? Have you to-day put on this?" she continued, calling Euphrosyne's attention to her new mourning; "and do you call it cruel to execute justice on the rebels and their officers?"

"It is a natural and amiable grief in Euphrosyne," said the abess; "and if it is not quite reasonable, we can give her time to reflect. She is among friends, who will not report the words of her hours of sorrow."

"You may, you may," cried Euphrosyne. "You may tell the whole world that it is cruel to—to— They were to have been married so very soon! Afra wrote me all about it."

The abess repeated what she had said about L'Ouverture's office and the requirements of justice.

"Justice! justice!" exclaimed Euphrosyne. "There has been no justice till now; and so the first act is nothing but cruelty."

The abess, with a look, dismissed Sister Claire, who, by a report of Euphrosyne's rebellion against justice, sent in Father Gabriel.

"Euphrosyne thinks, father," reported the abess, "that these negroes, in consideration of their ignorance, and of their anger at having once been slaves, should be excused for whatever they may now do in revenge."

"I am surprised," said Father Gabriel.

So was Euphrosyne when she heard her argument thus stated.

"I only mean," said she, striving to subdue her sobs, "I only mean that I wish Sister Claire, and Sister Benoite, and all of them, would not want me to be glad and revengeful."

"Glad and revengeful!" repeated Father Gabriel. "That would be difficult."

"It makes me very miserable; it can do no good now—it could not bring grandpapa to life

again if every negro in Limbé were shot," she continued, as tears rained down her cheeks. "Dear grandpapa never wished any ill to any body—he never did any body any harm—"

The priest and the abess exchanged glances.

"Why do you suppose these wretched blacks killed him, my dear?"

"I do not know why they rose this one particular time. But I believe they always rose because the whites have been proud and cruel; because the whites used to put them in chains, and whip them, and part mothers and children. After doing all this, and after bringing them up ignorant and without religion, we expect them to forgive every thing that has passed, while we will not forgive them ourselves. But I will—I will forgive them my share. For all that you religious people may say, I will forgive them: and I am not afraid of what grandpapa would think. I hope he is in a place now where there is no question about forgiving those who have injured us. The worst thing is—the thing that I can not understand is, how L'Ouverture could do any thing so cruel."

"I have a word to say to you, my dear," said the priest, with a sign to the abess.

"Oh, father!" replied the abess, in an imploring tone.

"We must bring her to a right view, reverend sister. Euphrosyne, if your grandfather had not been the kind master you suppose him—if he had been one of the cruel whites you spoke of just now—if his own slaves had always hated him, and—"

"Do stop!" said Euphrosyne, coloring crimson. "I can not bear to hear you speak so, father."

"You must bear, my child, to listen to what it is good for you to hear. If he had been disliked by every black in the colony, and they had sought his life out of revenge, would you still be angry that justice was done, and ungrateful that he is avenged?"

"You talk of avenging! you, a Christian priest!" said Euphrosyne. "You talk of justice! you, who slander the dead!"

"Peace, my daughter!" said the abess, very gently. "Remember where you are, and whom you speak to."

"Remember where my grandfather is," cried Euphrosyne. "Remember that he is in his grave, and that I am left to speak for him. However," she said—and in these few moments a thousand confirmations of the priest's words had rushed upon her memory—a thousand tokens of the mutual fear and hatred of her grandfather and the black race—a thousand signs of his repugnance to visit Le Bosquet—"however," she resumed, in a milder tone, and with an anxious glance at Father Gabriel's face, "Father Gabriel only said 'if'—*if* all that he described had been so."

"True, my child," replied the abess: "Father Gabriel only said 'if it had been so.'"

"And if it had," exclaimed Euphrosyne, who did not wish to hear the father speak

again at the moment, "if it had been so, it would have been wicked in the negroes to do that act in revenge; but it could never, never excuse us from forgiving them—from pitying them because they had been made cruel and revengeful. I am sure I wish they had all lived—that they might live many, many years, till they could forget those cruel old times, and, being old men themselves, might feel what it is to touch an old man's life. This is the kind of punishment I wish them; and I am sure it would be enough."

"It is indeed said," observed the abbess, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

"And oh! poor Génifrède!" pursued Euphrosyne. "She no more wished ill to my parent than I do to hers; and her lover—it was not he that did it: and yet—Oh, Father Gabriel, are you sure that that firing—that last volley—"

"It was certainly the death-stroke of Moysse. I perceive how it is, my child. I perceive that your friendships among this new race have blinded your eyes, so that you can not see that these executions are indeed God's avenging of the murder by which you are made a second time an orphan."

"Do you think L'Ouverture right, then? I should be glad to believe he was not cruel—dreadfully cruel."

"There is no doubt of L'Ouverture being wise and right—of his having finally assured the most unwilling of the inhabitants of their security, and his stern justice. There is no doubt that L'Ouverture is right."

"I could not have believed," said the abbess, "that my daughter would have required a justification of any thing done by L'Ouverture."

"Nor I," said Euphrosyne, sighing.

"Under him," said Father Gabriel, "there is less crime in the colony than, I verily believe, in any other part of the empire. Under him have homes become sacred, children are instructed, and brethren are taught to dwell together in unity."

"As," said the abbess, "when he stopped in his journey to greet an old negro of ninety-nine, and reconcile to him two who had offended out of his many children. L'Ouverture is never in so much haste but that he can pause to honor old age: never too busy for works of mercy. If the peace-makers are blessed, so is he."

"And where," continued the father, "where are the poor? We can observe his continual admonition to works of mercy by nursing the sick and consoling the afflicted; but we have no longer any poor. By his wisdom he has won over all to labor. The fields are thronged with laborers; the store-houses are overflowing with food and merchandise; and there is a portion for all."

"And it was the French," said Euphrosyne, "who made this last commotion. If they had let L'Ouverture alone, how happy we might all

have been! Now Génifrède will never be happy again. If L'Ouverture could only have forgiven this once! But, father, I have no comfort, and never shall have comfort, as long as I think that men have been murdered for injuring us."

"Pray for comfort, my child. In prayer you will find consolation."

"I dare not pray, now this has happened. If they were but alive, how I would pray for them!"

"They are alive, my daughter, and where they much need your prayers. Pray for them, and your intercession may be heard."

Euphrosyne saw that her feelings were not understood, and she said no more. She listened to all the teachings that were offered her, and reserved her doubts and troubles for Afra's ear. Afra would tell her whether it would be right in such a Christian as L'Ouverture to render violence for violence. As for what the father and the abbess said about the effect of example, and the necessity and the benefit of assuring and conciliating the whites, by sacrificing negro offenders for their sakes, she dissented from it altogether. She had witnessed Toussaint's power; the power with which his spirit of gentleness and forbearance endowed him; and she believed that, if he would but try, he would find he could govern better by declaring always for the right and against the wrong, and leaving vengeance to God, than by the violent death of all the ignorant and violent men in the island. She would ask Afra. She was pretty sure Afra would think as she did; and, if so, the time might come—it made her breathless to think of it, but she could not help thinking of it every day—the time might come when she might ask Toussaint himself what he thought was exactly meant, in all cases, by forgiving our enemies; and particularly whether this did not extend to forgiving other people's enemies, and using no vengeance and no violence at all.

This idea of seeing Afra gained strength under all the circumstances of her present life. If Father Gabriel offered her comfort which was no comfort, or reproved her when she did not feel herself wrong; if the abbess praised her for any thing she had not designed to be particularly right; if the sisters applauded sayings which she was conscious were not wise; if her heart ached for her grandfather's voice or countenance; if M. Critois visited her, or Pierre did not; if her lesson in history was hard, or her piece of needle-work dull; if her flowers faded, or her bird sang so finely that she would have been proud for the world to hear it, the passion for seeing Afra was renewed. Afra would explain all she could not understand, would teach her what she wanted to know. Afra would blame her where she was aware she was wrong, instead of bidding her be quit of it with a few prayers, while laying much heavier stress upon something that she could cure much more easily. Afra wrote

her a few letters, which were read by the abbess before they were delivered to her; and many more which Pierre slipped into her hand during their occasional interviews. She herself wrote such prodigiously long letters to Afra, that to read them through would have been too great an addition to the reverend mother's business. She glanced over the first page and the last; and, seeing that they contained criticisms on Alexander the Great, and pity for Socrates, and questions about flower-painting and embroidery, she skipped all that lay between.

It was not that Euphrosyne did not love and trust the abbess. She loved her so as to open to her all but the inner chambers of her heart; and she trusted her with all but other persons' concerns. The middle pages of her letters contained speculations chiefly; speculation, in the first place, on Afra's future destiny, names and events being shrouded under mysterious expressions; and, in the second place, on points of morals, which might be referred to M. Pascal, whose opinion was of great value. Euphrosyne had a strong persuasion, all the while, that she should one day tell her reverend mother the whole. She knew that she should not object to her seeing every line that Afra held of hers. Whatever was clandestine in the correspondence was for the sake of avoiding restraint, and not because she was ashamed of any of her thoughts.

One morning the abbess found her in the garden, listlessly watching the hues of a bright lizard as it lay panting in the sun. The abbess put her arm round her waist while stooping to look.

"How it glitters!" said she. "It is a pretty piece of God's handiwork; but we must leave it now, my dear. This sun is too hot for you. Your chamber, or Sister Claire's room, is the fittest place for you at this hour. You find your chamber cool?"

"Yes, madame."

"The new ventilator works well?"

"Yes, madame."

"You find—this way, my dear; this alley is the most shady—you find your little bed comfortable?"

"Yes, madame."

"And your toilet-cover—Sister Marie's work is, I think, extremely pretty: and the book-shelf that Father Gabriel gave you, very convenient. Your friends here, my dear, are fond of you. They are anxious to make you happy."

"They are all very kind to me, madame."

"I am glad you are sensible of it. You are not of an ungrateful nature, we all know."

"I hope not: but, madame, I can not stay here always."

"I was going to say, my dear, that we have not done every thing in our power for you yet. We must not forget that we grave women must be dull companions for a girl like you."

"It is not that, reverend mother. But I can not stay here always."

"You will find it a very different thing when you have a companion of your own age, which I hope will be the case very soon. There is a negotiation on foot respecting a sweet girl, every way worthy of being your companion—"

"But, madame, I do not want that; I do not wish for any companion while I am here. I had much rather be alone; but—"

"But you would like to leave us, eh? You would like to be on a plantation, where you could amuse yourself with playing with the little negroes, and driving about the country, and visiting your neighbors two or three times a week."

Euphrosyne smiled, and plucked a twig to play with.

"You would like," continued the abbess, "to live with accomplished people; to have a fine library; to lie on a couch and read during the hot hours; and to sing gay songs in the piazza in the evening."

Euphrosyne smiled again.

"You would like," the abbess went on, "to dance, night after night, and to make picnic parties to the cacao-walks and to the shore. You would like to win over your guardian to let you have your own way in every thing; and, to be sure, in comparison with his house, our convent—"

"My guardian!" exclaimed Euphrosyne. "Live at M. Critois's! Oh no!" And she laughed as she went on.

"He would be telling me every day that we should be very good friends. He would be saying all day long that it was his desire fully to discharge his duty to me. I can hardly help shaking off his hand now when he strokes my hair; and, if it came to his doing it every morning, we should certainly quarrel. They say Madame Critois never speaks; so I suppose she admires his conversation too much to interrupt it. There she and I should never agree. Live at my guardian's! Oh no!"

"You were thinking of some other house while I was describing your guardian's, my dear! What were you thinking of? Where would you live?"

Euphrosyne plucked another twig, having pulled the first to pieces. She smiled again, blushed, and said she would tell her reverend mother very soon what home she was thinking of: she could not tell to-day; but in a little while—

"In the mean time," said the abbess, with a scrutinizing gaze, "in the mean time, I conclude Father Gabriel knows all that is in your mind."

"You will know in good time what I am thinking of, madame: every body will know."

The abbess was troubled.

"This is beginning early," she said, as if thinking aloud; "this is beginning early with the mysteries and entanglements of life and the world! How wonderful it is to look on—to be a witness of these things for two or three successive generations! How every young crea-

ture thinks her case something wholly new; the emotions of her awakened heart something that God never before witnessed, and that man never conceived of! After all that has been written about love, upon the cavern walls of Hindoo temples, and in the hieroglyphics of old Egypt, and printed over all the mountains and valleys of the world by that deluge which was sent to quench unhallowed love, every young girl believes in her day that something unheard-of has happened when the dream has fallen upon her. My dear child, listen to one who knows more of life than you do; to one who would have you happy, not only in the next world, but in this."

"Thank you, reverend mother."

"Love is holy and blessed, my dear, when it comes in its due season; when it enters into a mind disciplined for new duties, and a heart waiting for new affections. In one who has no mother to help and comfort—"

"No, mother, it is true," said Euphrosyne.

"The mother is the parent most naturally missed," said the abbess, supposing she was reading her pupil's mind. "Where there is no mother by a young girl's side, and no brothers and sisters to serve, the fancy and the heart are apt to fix prematurely on some object—too likely, in that case, to be one which will deceive and fail. But, my dear, such a young girl owes duty to herself, if God has seen fit to make her solitary in the world."

"One can not say solitary," interposed Euphrosyne, "or without duties."

"You are right, my love. No one is, indeed, solitary in life (blessed be God!) nor without duties. As I was going to say, such a young girl's business is to apply herself diligently to her education during the years usually devoted to instruction. This is the work appointed to her youth. If, while her mind is yet ignorant, her judgment inexperienced, and her tastes actually unformed, she indulges any affection or fancy which makes her studies tedious, her companions dull, and her mind and spirits listless, she has fallen into a fearful snare."

"How long, then, would you have a girl's education go on? And if her lover be very particularly wise and learned, do not you think she may learn more from him than in any other way? And if she be not dull and listless, but very happy—"

"Every girl," interrupted the abbess, with a grave smile, "thinks her lover the wisest man in the world; and no girl in love would exchange her dreams for the gayest activity of the fancy-free."

"Well, but as to the age," persisted Euphrosyne; "how soon—"

"That depends upon circumstances, my dear. But in all cases I consider sixteen too early."

"Sixteen! Yes. But nineteen, or, one may say, twenty. Twenty, next month but one."

"My dear," said the abbess, stopping short, "you do not mean to say—"

"Indeed, madame," said Euphrosyne, very earnestly, "Afra will be twenty in two months. I know her age to a day, and—"

"And you have been speaking of Mademoiselle Raymond all this time? Well, well—"

"And you were thinking of me, I do believe. Oh, madame, how could you? Why, I never saw any body."

"I was wondering how it could be," said the abbess, striving to conceal her amusement and satisfaction. "I was surprised that you should have seen any one yet; and I was going to give you a lecture about half-confidences with Father Gabriel."

"And I could not conceive what Father Gabriel had to do with Afra's affairs, or how you came to know any thing about it. I have let it out now, however; and I do not know what Afra will say."

"You have not told me who the gentleman is, you know; so there is not much harm done. No, do not tell me, my dear, till Mademoiselle Raymond desires it."

"Oh, I may as well, now you know so much. I dare say Afra would have no objection, particularly as you will then understand what I meant about living somewhere else. When you talked of a fine library," she continued, laughing, "how could I suppose you were thinking of any in the colony but M. Pascal's?"

"So he is the gentleman," said the abbess. "How times are changed! A lady of color may be Madame Pascal now without reproach."

"I am glad it is out," said Euphrosyne, gayly. "I can speak now to somebody about Afra. Oh, madame, you do not know, you can not imagine how they love one another."

"Can not I?" and the abbess sighed.

"And I may look forward to living with them. They say I may, madame. They say I must. And surely my guardian will have no objection. Do you think he can, madame?"

"Indeed I do not know. I am acquainted with the parties only by hearsay. Report speaks highly of M. Pascal. Some persons at Paris, and some formerly in office here, are surprised at his unequalled adherence to the Overture system; but I never heard any thing worse of him than that."

"And that is nothing but good, as any one would say who really knew all those dear people. L'Overture and M. Pascal are almost like father and son. Afra says—"

"My dear," interposed the abbess, "you wondered how I knew of this affair. You must allow me to wonder how you have gained all this intelligence. Mademoiselle Raymond must have crossed her letters with sympathetic ink, which the warmth of your friendship brought out; for not a syllable of what you have told me had her letters conveyed to me."

The abbess did not mean to press for an answer; so indulgent was she made by the complacency of discovering that her charge was not entangled in a love-affair. While Euphrosyne was blushing, and hunting for a reply

which should be true and yet guarded, she was relieved by the rapid approach of Sister Benoite.

"Something is amiss," said the abbess, assuming the look of calmness with which she was wont to await bad news. "What has happened to alarm you, my daughter?"

"There is a message, reverend mother," said the breathless nun, "from Madame Ogé. She invites herself to our evening repast. If you can not receive her to-day, she will come to-morrow."

"She shall be welcome," said the abbess, without, however, much of the spirit of welcome in her tone.

"So this is our calamity," said Euphrosyne, laughing.

"There is calamity at hand, assuredly," sighed Sister Benoite.

"Nay, nay, my daughter. This is superstition," said the abbess.

"Whatever it be, reverend mother, do we not all—does not every one quake when Madame Ogé comes abroad?"

"It is but seldom that she does," said the abbess; "and it is our part to make her welcome."

"But seldom, indeed, reverend mother. When all goes well—when the crops are fine, and the island all at peace, no one hears of Madame Ogé. She keeps within her coffee-groves—"

"Mourning her sons," interposed the abbess.

"But," continued the nun, "when any disaster is about to happen, we have notice of it by Madame Ogé coming abroad. She came to this very house the first day of the meeting of the deputies, in that terrible August of ninety-one. She came a day or two before the rising against Hédouville. She came a night or two before the great hurricane of ninety-seven—"

"That was an accident," said the abbess, smiling.

"Then you think it is not by accident that she always comes out before misfortunes happen?" asked Euphrosyne, trembling as she spoke.

"By no means, my dear. It is easily explained. Madame Ogé looks upon her sons as martyrs in the cause of the mulattoes. When all goes well, as all has done under L'Ouverture's rule, with only a few occasional troubles—fewer and slighter than might have been expected during such a change in society as we have witnessed—when all goes well, Madame Ogé feels that her sons are forgotten; and, as my daughter Benoite says, she mourns them alone in the shades of her coffee-groves. She seems, however, to have means of information which persons less interested have not; and when she has reason to believe that troubles will ensue, she hopes that the names of her sons will once more be a watch-word for the humiliation of both blacks and whites; and she comes forth with her hungry maternal heart,

and her quick maternal ear, to catch the first echo of the names which are forever mingled with her prayers."

"Can she mingle those names with her prayers, and yet not forgive?"

"My child, is it not so with us all? Do we not pray for our enemies, and ask to be forgiven as we forgive, and come out from our closets with ears open to the fresh slanders of the day, and hearts ready to burn at the thought of old injuries? It might be well for us if we had the excuse of this wretched woman, whose woes have been such as might naturally have shaken her reason and prostrated her will. If there be any above others with whom God will be long-suffering, it is with the mother whose children have been torn from her arms, to be tortured and destroyed, and their very names made a term of reproach."

"You think something is going to happen?"

"As my daughter Benoite says, on one occasion there was a hurricane. To-morrow the sun may rise, or there may be a cloud in the sky."

"Nay, but—" said Sister Benoite.

"Nay, but," said the abbess, smiling, "I will have nothing said which shall make Euphrosyne look upon my guest as a sorceress, or as the instrument of any evil one. I wish all my daughters to meet Madame Ogé with cheerfulness. It is the best I have to offer her—the cheerfulness of my family, and that of which she has least at home. You hear, Euphrosyne?"

"Madame, you do not mean that I am to see her. Indeed I can not—indeed I dare not. It is no disrespect—quite the contrary. But I could not hold up my head before one who—"

"Poor Madame Ogé, if all said so!" exclaimed the abbess.

"That is true," said Euphrosyne, "I will be there; but, dear mother, do not speak particularly to me. Do not draw her attention upon me."

"I will not, my dear."

"Do you think she will speak angrily of the Overtures? I hope she will say nothing about poor General Moysé."

"You must bear what she says, be it what it may."

"True. And it is only for one evening. But I wish it was over. I shall be glad when to-morrow morning is come, and I shall be in this alley again."

"Meantime, my dear, you have been long enough here for this morning. Let us go in."

The prospect of any guest was in itself acceptable to the sisterhood. It gave them something to do, and afforded one day of variety. The abbess's parlor and the refectory had to be adorned with fresh flowers. Napkins, of the workmanship of one sister, were laid beside the plates; and on the table were fruits gathered by another, sweetmeats made by a third, and chocolate prepared by the careful hands of a fourth. Even the abbess's veil looked whiter, and more exactly put on than usual. Every

thing within the walls was in its nicest order some time before Madame Ogé's carriage drew up before the gate.

Two or three of the sisters and Euphrosyne were with the abbess in her parlor when Madame Ogé entered. Euphrosyne had permission to bring in her work, so that she could sit plying her needle, and listening to what went on, without many nervous feelings about being observed by a person whom she could become acquainted with only by stealing glances at her face.

That face, she thought, must in its youth have had much of the beauty common among mulattoes, if not natural to them, in a favorable climate. It was now deeply impressed with sorrow. Every line, every feature told of sorrow. There was no other painful expression in it. There was great solemnity, but stillness rather than passion; nothing which warranted, in itself, the superstitious fears which the sisters had of the unhappy lady. She was handsomely dressed, and her manner was quiet.

The conversation turned first upon the state of the coffee and sugar crops, about which little could be said, because the prospect of every kind of produce was excellent. So much regard was everywhere paid to the processes of cultivation; and the practice of ten years, under the vigilant eye of Toussaint and his agents, had so improved the methods of tillage and the habits of the cultivators, that the bounties of the soil and climate were improved instead of being intercepted. Every year since the revolution the harvests had been richer; and this was the crowning year.

"Yes," said Madame Ogé; "we have heard a great deal of all that, and I fancy we have nearly heard the last of it."

"There must, indeed," replied the abbess, "be some limit to the fruitfulness of the soil, and to the industry of those who till it; and it does seem as if the earth could yield no more than it is bringing forth this year."

"Father Gabriel says," observed Sister Claire, "that in his journeys he could almost believe that the fields sing, and the hills rejoice with music, as the Scripture says; the cultivators are so hidden among the corn, and the canes, and the groves, and the vines, that their songs seem really to come out of the ground."

"It is in the woods," added Sister Benoîte, "as if the very trees shouted—"

She stopped abruptly before the name L'Ouverture, remembering that it would not be acceptable to all the present company.

"I have no doubt," said Madame Ogé, "that all the monkeys and parrots are taught to shout L'Ouverture. Like his people, they are quick at learning that much. But I imagine there will be something else for Toussaint to do presently than teaching the birds of the woods to praise him."

As no one asked what was likely to happen, she reserved for the present the news they trembled to hear, and went on:

"It is grievous to see so good a negro as Toussaint lost and spoiled. I knew him of old, when he was at Breda; and many a time has M. Bayou told me that he was the most faithful, decent, clever, well-mannered negro on the estate."

"I believe he preserves those qualities still," observed the abbess, reproving with a glance the laugh which was rising at this description of the commander-in-chief.

"If those had been masters who ought to have been masters," pursued Madame Ogé, "Toussaint would no doubt have been placed at the head of the negroes; for we knew him well—I and they whom I have lost. Then, without insubordination—without any being lifted out of their proper places to put down others, we should have had a vast improvement in the negroes. Toussaint would have been made their model, and perhaps would have been rewarded with his freedom some day or other, for example. This would have satisfied all the ambition he had by nature. He would have died a free man, and perhaps have emancipated his family. As it is, they will all die slaves; and they will feel it all the harder for the farce of greatness they have been playing these ten years. I am very sorry for them, and I always was; for I foresaw from the beginning how it would end."

"Do you really imagine that any one thinks of enslaving this wonderful man again? And what should make him submit to it?"

"He would sooner lay a train to the root of Cibao, and blow up the island," exclaimed Euphrosyne.

"Are you one of his party, young lady? You look too much as if you were but just landed from France for me to suppose that I was speaking before a friend of L'Ouverture's. If you really are lately from France, you may know that there is a greater than our poor Toussaint, to whom he must yield at command."

"I have never been at Paris, madame; and I do not believe that there is a greater than L'Ouverture there, or anywhere else."

"You have been a happy child, I see; you have lived so retired from our miserable world as not to have heard of Bonaparte. It was by Bonaparte, my dear—for Bonaparte's convenience, and (it is my idea) for his amusement, that Toussaint was made what he is, and allowed to gallop about, with his trumpeters behind him, for so long. You look as if you did not believe me, my dear. Well, time will show."

"I thought," said Euphrosyne, "that Toussaint was the First of the Blacks before Bonaparte was the First of the Whites. I have no doubt, however, that it has been very convenient to Bonaparte, and very surprising to him and every body, that the colony has been so perfectly well governed by one from whom they could have expected nothing. I hope Bonaparte will be too wise and too grateful to injure him, or even to hurt his feelings; and I feel

very sure that Bonaparte is not strong enough, with all the world to help him, to make L'Ouverture and his family slaves again."

"We shall see. Even I may live to see it; and I have no doubt you will. Bonaparte is going to try; and if he can not, as you say, do it by himself, he may now persuade all the world to help him; for he is making peace on all hands."

"You have that news from France?" inquired the abbess.

"I have it from a sure quarter—never mind how. It will soon be generally known that the preliminaries of peace between France and England are signed: and I happen to know two things more—that Bonaparte has agreed to maintain negro slavery in Martinique, Gaudaloupe, and Cayenne; and that (pray listen, young lady) he declares to the English that he can do what he pleases in St. Domingo. I wish he could see that angry blush. Pray look at her, madame! I see she thinks Bonaparte a very impertinent fellow."

"I do," replied Euphrosyne: "and I hope he will know better and feel better, before he is L'Ouverture's age."

"Ha! he ought to know what disloyal little hearts there are beating against him in this St. Domingo that he thinks all his own."

"Perhaps," observed the abbess, "he used these words when he was not speaking of slavery; but rather from being aware of the loyalty of the Ouverture family, which is, I believe, exemplary."

"It is," declared Euphrosyne, looking up, with glowing eyes. "He has not only served, but worshiped Bonaparte, all the years that they have both ruled. In his own family, M. Pascal says—"

"What is M. Pascal to do under the changes that are coming?" interrupted Madame Ogé. "He has placed himself in a difficulty, it seems to me. Will he go under the yoke with his father-in-law? (for I suppose, in his devotion, he will be marrying one of Toussaint's daughters). Will he take the hoe and go into the field.—You are smiling, my dear young lady."

Euphrosyne was indeed smiling. She could not but hope that, as Madame Ogé was so ill-informed about the affairs of M. Pascal and of the Raymonds, who were of her own color, she might be mistaken about the whole of her news.

"You are smiling," repeated Madame Ogé. "Though you stoop your head over your work, I see that you have some droll thought."

"It would be strange, certainly," replied Euphrosyne, "to see the philosophical M. Pascal hoeing canes or working at the mill. Yet I believe we may be certain that he will be a slave as soon as Toussaint, or any negro in St. Domingo."

"Young people like to be positive," said Madame Ogé to the abbess. "But it does not much matter, as they have life before them; time enough to see what is true and what is

not. Is it your doctrine, my dear young lady, that God has given over his wrath toward this island; and that it is to be happy henceforth with the negroes for masters?"

"With the negroes for equals, I think it may be happy. But I never thought of God being wrathful toward us. I thought our miseries had arisen out of men's wrath with each other."

"If ever," said Madame Ogé, in a low tone, but yet so that every word was heard, "if ever there was a place set apart by cursing, if ever there was a hell upon this earth, it is this island. Men can tell us where Paradise was: it was not here, whatever Columbus might say. The real Paradise, where the angels of God kept watch, and let no evil thing enter, was on the other side of the globe: and I say that this place was meant for a hell, as that was for a heaven, upon earth. It looked like heaven to those who first came; but that was the devil's snare. It was to make lust sweeter, and cruelty safer, that he adorned the place as he did. In a little while it appeared like what it was. The innocent natives were corrupted—the defenceless were killed—the strong were made slaves. The plains were laid waste, and the valleys and woods were rifled. The very bees ceased to store their honey; and among the wild game there was found no young. Then came the sea-robbers and haunted the shores; and many a dying wretch screamed at night among the caverns—many a murdered corpse lies buried in our sands. Then the negroes were brought in from over the sea; and from among their chains, from under the lash, grew up the hatred of races. The whites hated the mulattoes and despised the blacks. The mulattoes hated both the whites and the blacks; and—"

"And," interposed Euphrosyne, courageously, "the blacks hated neither. They loved where they could; and where they could not love, they forgave; and there lies the proof that this island is not hell."

"You have proved nothing, my dear, but that you do not know what has happened, even since you were born. Any white will tell you what the negroes did so late as the year ninety-one—how they killed their masters by inches—how they murdered infants—how they carried off ladies into the woods—"

A sign from the abbess availed to stop Madame Ogé, even in the midst of a subject on which none usually dared to interrupt her. Euphrosyne, in some agitation, replied,

"I am aware of all that you say; but every one allows that the most ignorant and cruel of the negroes did over again exactly what they had seen the whites do to their race. But these revengeful blacks were few, very few, in comparison with the numbers who spared their masters, helped and comforted them, and are now working on their estates—friends with all who will be friends with them. The place is not hell where thousands of men forget the in-

sults of a lifetime, and bind up the wounds of their oppressors."

"I can not doubt," said the abbess, "that ever since there was a Christian in the island, there have been angels of God at hand, to sanctify the evil which they were not commissioned to prevent. Violence is open to the day. Patience is hidden in the heart. Revenge has shouted his battle-cry at noon, while forgiveness breathes her lowly prayer at midnight. Spirits from hell may have raged along our high roads; but I trust that, in the fiercest times, the very temper of Christ may have dwelt in a thousand homes, in a thousand nooks of our valleys and our woods."

"Besides," Sister Benoîte ventured to say, "our worst troubles were so long ago! For ten years, now, we have been under the holy rule of a devout man; and, for the most part, at peace."

"Peace!" exclaimed Madame Ogé, contentedly.

"There have been disputes among the rulers, as Father Gabriel says there are among all the rulers in the world; but he says (and no one knows better than Father Gabriel) that the body of the people have not been troubled by these disputes, and are not even aware of them."

"Does not Father Gabriel tell you that ten years are but a day in heaven and hell! Yes, in hell; they may be long for suffering, but they are short for revenge. The cruel master, who saw one slave faint under the lash, and let another die in the stocks, and tore the husband from the wife, and the child from the mother, might escape for the time with the destruction of his family, punished for his sake; he might live safely, in the midst of the city, for the ten years you speak of; but let him venture out for a single day—let him but drive to his own estate and back again, and, gray as his head is, he is shot in his own carriage as soon as it is dark."

Before the abbess could anticipate what was coming, the words were out. Before she could make a sign, Euphrosyne had rushed from the room.

It was not long before the abbess entered the chamber of her charge. She found her stretched on the bed, not weeping, but shuddering with horror.

"My daughter," said she, "I grieve that this trial should have come upon you already. If one could have foreseen—"

"But, madame, is it true? She meant *him*, I know. Tell me faithfully, is it true?"

"It is, my daughter."

"What, all? Every one of those things?"

"All true. Perhaps it is well that you should know it, that the departed may have the benefit of your prayers. But how differently would I have had you told!"

"Never mind that! Whatever is true, I can and will bear. I will pray for him, madame, day and night; as long as I live will I

pray for him; for he was to me— Oh, madame, how he loved me! I will make reparation for him—the reparation that he would make if he could. I will find out who were the poor creatures—I will make them happy for as long as they live, for his sake. You will help me, madame."

"I will. It is a pious intention."

"I owe him all that I can do. I ask one favor of you, madame. Let no one speak to me about him—never again. No one can understand what he was to me—what care he took of me—how he used to love me. Oh! madame, is it quite certain—are you quite sure that those things are true?"

"My child, do not give me the pain of explaining more. As you say, let this never again be spoken of. I propose to you, Euphrosyne, to make a virtuous effort."

"Not to come down this evening, madame?"

"Yes, my child, to come down this evening. I think it of importance that Madame Ogé should not discover how she has wounded you, and that nothing should occur to fix her attention on the descendant of one who was active in procuring the death of her sons. Trust me, my dear, it is worth an effort to prevent Madame Ogé leaving this house your enemy."

"I do not care for it, madame. Let her hate me. She is quite welcome."

"You are thinking only of yourself, Euphrosyne. I am thinking also of her. Consider how sore a heart she carries within her. Consider how wretched her life has been made by the enmities in which she has lived. Will you not save her one more? You have professed to pity her. Now you can show it, if your pity is real, by saving her from a new enmity."

"I am willing to do that; but how can I speak to her! How can we know what things she may say?"

"You shall not converse with her again. The table is spread. Go down now, and take your place at the foot, beside Sister Claire. When we rise from table, I will dismiss you to your room as in course."

"I wish that time was come," sighed Euphrosyne, as she languidly arranged her hair.

The abbess stroked her pale cheek as she said that in an hour she would be glad the effort was made.

"You can spend the evening in writing to your friend," said she; "and, if you think proper to tell her that I know her secret, you may assure her of my blessing and my prayers. They are due to one who loves my dear charge as she does."

Euphrosyne's cheeks were now no longer pale.

"And may I tell her, madame, what Madame Ogé has been declaring about Bonaparte and his threats?"

"It will be needless, my dear. If there be any truth in the matter, M. Pascal doubtless knows more than Madame Ogé."

"In that case, there can be no harm in mentioning it."

Still the abbess thought it would be safer to say nothing about it; and Euphrosyne gave up the point for to-night, remembering that she could perhaps send a private dispatch afterward by the hands of Pierre.

During the meal, while the length of the table was between them, Euphrosyne nearly escaped the notice of Madame Ogé. When it was over, and the sisters rose, while the guest and the abbess passed out to the parlor, the abbess stopped at Euphrosyne, kissed her forehead, and commended her to her studies. Madame Ogé stopped too, and put in an intercession that the young lady might be excused studying this evening, and permitted to return to her pretty fancy-work in the parlor. The color rushed to Euphrosyne's temples—a sign of ardent hope of a holiday in Madame Ogé's eyes. She therefore thought the abbess grievously strict when she replied that her charge would prefer spending the evening in her own chamber.

"As you please," said Madame Ogé. "It was my wish to do the child a kindness, and perhaps to have the pleasure myself of seeing a young face for an hour or two—the rarest of all sights to me. I seldom go out; and when I do, all the young and cheerful faces seem to have hidden themselves."

The abbess regulated her invitations for the evening by this speech. Sisters Debora and Marie, one the youngest, and the other the merriest of the family, were requested to bring their work-bags, and join the party in the parlor.

"Good-evening, young lady," said Madame Ogé to Euphrosyne, holding out her hand. "I hoped to have procured you a little freedom, and to have had more conversation about your hero; but—"

"If there are to be great changes in the colony," observed the abbess, "it may yet be in your power, madame, to show kindness to my charge."

"If so, command me, my dear. But it is more likely that the changes to come will have the opposite effect. Then pretty young white ladies may have all their own way, while the storm will burst again on the heads of the dark people."

"If so, command me, madame," Euphrosyne exerted herself to say. The abbess's smile made her eyes fill with tears almost before she had spoken.

"Are your eyes wet for me, my dear?" said Madame Ogé, with surprise. "Let the storm burst upon me; for I am shattered and stricken already, and nothing can hurt me. But I shall remember your offer. Meantime, you may depend upon it, the news I told you is true; the times I warned you of are coming."

"What news? what warning?" eagerly asked the sisters of Euphrosyne, as soon as the guest was out of hearing.

"That there were hurricanes last November, and there will be more the next," replied she, escaping to her chamber. Before she slept, she had written all her news and all her thoughts to Afra, leaving it for decision in the morning whether she should send entire what she had written.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE HERALD ABROAD.

MADAME OGE'S news was too true. M. Pascal had held many an anxious conversation with L'Ouverture on the subject before Afra showed him her little friend's letter. In a short time an additional fact became known—that Bonaparte had re-established the slave-trade. His enmity to the race of blacks was now open and declared.

The first intimation which the colony at large had of what had happened was through the altered demeanor of their chief. From the first bright day of the prolific, gorgeous summer, to that in which the season merged in a fierce autumnal storm, L'Ouverture had been seen to be not less calm and quiet than usual, but depressed and sad. Some ascribed his gloom to the transaction at Cap, and the misery it must needs have introduced into his home. Others, who saw how much the colony had gained in confidence, and Toussaint's government in strength, by that act, looked for a different cause. Some reminded each other that, while no man was more energetic in the hour of proof than their chief, his spirits were wont to droop when others were elated. It seemed as if some boding ghost whispered evil to him most imperiously when the harvests were ripest before his eyes, when the laugh and the song were loudest in his ear, and when no one dreamed that the bright days of the colony would ever more be overclouded.

It was even so. When Toussaint saw that his race was in peace, it filled him with grief that this peace was not likely to last. When he saw what the true African soul was when cleansed from blood and anger, and permitted to grow in freedom and in harmony, it was torture to know (as he did too well) that new injuries were preparing for it; that it was certain to be again steeped in passion and slaughter, and all that was savage in it excited afresh. This, even more than the death of Moyse, cast gloom round his soul during the last of the series of bright and prosperous summers that were to pass under his eye. When autumn came, it might have made him wonder, if he had had leisure to consider himself, to find how his spirits rose and his heart grew light, not exactly when dismay and dread began to overcloud every face about him, but when he saw that suspense and struggle were coming to an end. He perceived perplexity in the countenance of his friend Pascal, even in the presence of his bride. He met sorrow in the mild eyes of Henri. He

heard that exultation in the voice of Jacques which always struck like discord upon his ear. He observed that in the bearing of Madame Dessalines, which carried back his memory ten years into her past history. He saw Aimée tremble at the approach of any one who might bring news from France; and he heard Margot weeping at her prayers, as she implored from Heaven the safe return of her sons. Yet all this caused to his sympathizing heart scarcely a pang; so clear was his path now, so distinct was the issue to which his duty and the fate of his race was brought.

"Here it ends, then," said he, one day, at the council-table, rising as he spoke. "Here ends all possibility of compromise. For the blacks, it is slavery or self-defense. It is so, M. Pascal."

"It is. The terms of the new peace are proclaimed."

"And the fact substantiated that Bonaparte has declared that he will do what he pleases with St. Domingo."

"Such were certainly his words."

"Who is surprised?" inquired Dessalines. "I forewarned you of this long ago; and I said at the same time that, if we waited for aggression, we might find it too late for defense."

"Not a word of fear, Jacques! Our victory is as sure as the justice of Heaven."

"Perhaps so; but it would have been easier if you had not been training your people, all these years, to love and cherish those whom they are now going to resist."

"I see and admit our difficulty, Jacques. But if I had governed as you would have had me, we should have been in a worse. I should then have been the chief of a race of savages instead of soldiers and citizens. If we had been extirpating the whites all this time, we should now have been destroying each other instead of preparing to go forth to a righteous war."

"True. Most true," declared Henri. "We may suffer for a time, and fight with the more difficulty, from our habits of observance toward those whom we must now oppose. But God will not allow the spirit of forgiveness and love to be finally a snare."

"Never," said Toussaint. "He has appointed fierce passions for a yoke, and mild affections for freedom. Though Bonaparte betrays and oppresses, the Gospel stands. It is now time for proclaiming the war throughout the colony."

"I will prepare the proclamation this night," said M. Pascal.

"If you will, my friend," said Toussaint. "But I intend to be my own proclamation. To-morrow morning I set forth for St. Domingo, to visit my brother in his city. I shall examine every fort, and call together the militia as I go. The trip would be more effective if I could have my council about me."

"I will go with you," said Henri.

"And I," exclaimed Jacques.

"And I?" said Raymond, inquiringly.

"No, Raymond. Stay at Port-au-Prince, to report my proceedings to the Legislature. And you, M. Pascal, remain here to receive the dispatches which may arrive from France. My brethren-in-arms of the council will be with me. When we have satisfied ourselves, we will let you know whether or not those who would have loved and served France forever as a guardian angel, can cast her off when she becomes an incubus."

It was a time of high excitement—that in which L'Ouverture, attended by four of his generals and a train of inferior officers, traversed the island, to communicate or confirm the intelligence that an expedition was believed to be setting sail from France for the purpose of wresting from the blacks the freedom which was theirs by the law of the land. Toussaint found, not only that all hearts were ready for the assertion of freedom, but that all eyes were so fixed upon him, all ears so open to his lightest word, that there was every probability of his purposes being fully understood and completely executed. At a word from him, the inhabitants of Cap Français and Port-au-Prince began to remove their property into the fastnesses of the interior, and to prepare to burn those towns at the moment of the French attempting to land. It was useless to think of preventing a landing, so exposed was the greater part of the coast. The more rational hope was so to distress the foe on shore as to make them glad to go on board their ships again. Equally satisfactory was the disposition of the interior. The municipal bodies throughout the colony, previously brought under one system, now acted in concert. Their means of communication had been improved, so that each settlement was no longer like an encampment in the wilderness; on the contrary, every order given by L'Ouverture seemed to have been echoed by the mountain tops around, so promptly was it transmitted, and so continually did he find his commands anticipated. As he went, his four generals parted off, to examine the forts on either hand, and to inspect and animate the militia. Everywhere the same story was told, and everywhere was it received with the same eagerness and docility. "The French are coming to make slaves of us again. But—there shall never more be a slave in St. Domingo. They are coming; but they are our countrymen till they have struck the first blow. We will demand of them an account of our brethren in Cayenne, in Guadaloupe, and in Martinique. We will ask of them concerning our brethren on the coasts of Africa. If, in return, they throw us chains and the whip, we shall know how to answer. But not a blow must be struck till they have shown whether they are brethren or foes. Our dark skin is no disgrace; but the first drop of a brother's blood dyes us all in infamy. Let the infamy be theirs who assault us. At this moment, our first duty is to our white brethren of this island. In this time of our high excitement, they are full of grief. They are guiltless

of this attack upon our liberty. They are as willing as we to live and die under the rule of L'Ouverture; and under the special protection of L'Ouverture they shall, if they please, live and die. Beware of imputing to them the sins of their color. Protect them from your hearts—defend them with your lives. In the hour of danger, as you invoke the blessing of Heaven, save first the creole whites, and next your wives and your children."

Such were the exhortations spoken everywhere by Christophe, La Plume, and Clerveaux. It could not be expected of Dessalines that he should deliver the last clauses with perfect fidelity. The solemnity of the hour had, however, its tranquilizing effect, even upon his ruling passion. Even his heart, which usually turned to stone at the sight of a white, was moved by the visible distress of the proprietors of that race, who were, with scarcely an exception, in despair. In private they execrated the spirit and conduct of their former neighbors, now in Paris, whose representations were the chief cause of the expedition now projected. Instead of remaining, or returning to ascertain the real state of things in St. Domingo—instead of respecting the interests and wishes of those who were entirely satisfied under the government of L'Ouverture, they had prejudiced the mind of the First Consul, and induced him to bring back the ruin and woe which had passed away. The ladies wept and trembled within their houses. Their fathers, husbands, and brothers flocked to every point where L'Ouverture halted, to assure him of their good-will to his government, and to remind him of the difficulty and danger of the position in which they were placed. These last carried some comfort home with them. All who had seen Toussaint's face had met there the gaze of a brother. If there were two or three who went with doubtful minds, prepared to exult at the depression of the blacks, but thinking it well to bespeak protection in case of the struggle ending the wrong way—if there was a sprinkling of such among the throng of whites who joined the cavalcade from the cross-roads, they shrunk away abashed before the open countenance of the Deliverer, and stole homeward to wait the guidance of events.

If it had not been that the city of St. Domingo was at the end of this march, Toussaint would have traversed the colony with a higher spirit and a lighter heart than during any of his serener days of power. But the city of his brother's government was before him, and at its gates Paul, whom he had not met since the death of Moysé. He had not been forgetful of his sorrowing brother. He had immediately sent to him Father Laxabon—the best consoler, as the last confidant of the departed. Letter upon letter had Toussaint sent; deed upon deed of kindness had he attempted toward his brother; but still Father Laxabon had written, "Come not yet." "He must have time." "Give him time, if there is to be

peace between you." Now it had become necessary that they should meet; and far readier was Toussaint to encounter the armies of France than the countenance of his brother. Forever, in the midst of the excitements of the journey, he found himself asking in his own mind where and how Paul would meet him; and whether he had cut off from himself his brother as well as his brother's son.

Meantime the party rode proudly on through the interior of the island, signs of welcome spreading around them at every step. From the grass-farms in the wide savannas the herdsmen hastened, with promises to drive their flocks up into the Mornes, where no enemy should penetrate while a man remained to guard the passes. At each salute from the forts that rose at intervals along the way, the wild cattle rushed toward the steeps; while the parties of hunters turned back from their sport, to offer themselves as scouts and messengers on behalf of the colony. From some glade of the woods appeared the monk, charged with the blessing of his convent; or the grazier, with a string of horses—his gift for the service of the army. Around the crosses which, half concealed by the long grass of the plains, yet served to mark the road, were gathered groups of women, bearing bags of money, or ornaments of gold and silver, which they would have thrust upon him, to whom they declared that they owed their all; while every settlement displayed its company of armed men, standing in military order, and rending the air with shouts on the approach of their chief. La Plume and Clerveaux, to whom such demonstrations were less familiar than to the other generals, no longer doubted that all would be well. They pronounced that the colony already showed itself invincible. Toussaint thought that he might have been of the same opinion if the expected foe had been any other than French. The event must show whether the pains he had taken to unite his race with their fellow-citizens as brethren would now weaken or strengthen his cause—whether it would enhance or mitigate the bitterness of the impending quarrel.

On the morning of the last day of their survey of the interior, the party emerged from the shade of the woods, and, crossing the grassy level of the Llamos, reached the ferry by which the Ozama was to be crossed near its mouth. On the opposite bank were horsemen, who, on observing the party approaching the ferry, put spurs to their horses and galloped southward in the direction of the city. They need not so have hastened; for the Deliverer was stopped at every fishing hamlet—almost at every hut along the shores of the bay, to receive the loyal homage of the inhabitants, Spanish as well as French. In the midst of these greetings, the eye and the soul of the chief were absent—looking to what lay before him. There, at some distance, springing from the level of the plain, rose the Cathedral of St. Domingo and

other lofty buildings, whose outline was distinctly marked against the glittering sea which spread immediately behind. An ungovernable impatience seized him at length, and he broke away, bursting through the throngs upon the road, and resolving not to stop till he should have seen his fate, as a brother, in his brother's eyes.

A procession of priests was issuing from the city gate as he approached. They were robed, and they bore the Host under a canopy. At the first sound of their chant, the generals and their suite threw themselves from their horses and prostrated themselves upon the grass. On rising, they perceived that the whole city had come out to meet them. "The whole city," Toussaint heard his companions say; and his heart throbbled when he strained his sight to see if the governor of the city was the only one left at home. The procession of priests had now turned, and was preceding him—slowly—so slowly, that he would fain have dispensed with the solemnity. The people crowded round his horse and impeded his way. He strove to be present to the occasion; but all was like a troubled dream—the chanting, the acclamation, the bursts of military music from a distance; all that at other times had fired his soul, was now disturbance and perplexity. A few faithless persons in the crowd, on the watch for information with which they might make interest with the French on their arrival, noted the wandering of the eye and the knitting of the brow, and drew thence a portent of the fall of the Deliverer.

At length the gate was reached; and there, in the shadow of the portal, surrounded by his attendants, stood Paul. On the arrival of his brother at the threshold, he took from an officer the velvet cushion on which the keys of the city were deposited, and, advancing to the stirrup of the commander-in-chief, offered them, according to custom. For an instant Toussaint gazed on the aged, worn, melancholy countenance beside him, and then stooped from his horse to fling his arms round the neck of his brother, breathing into his ear,

"If you are in your duty at such a time as this, who else dare fail me? I thank God! I thank God! We can not fail."

Paul withdrew himself without speaking. His action was sullen. He led the way, however, toward the governor's house, evidently expecting to be followed. Not another word passed between them on the way. Through one wide street after another L'Ouverture was led; and from the balconies of whole ranges of fine houses, from the roof of many a church, and the porch of many a convent, was he hailed, before he could catch another glimpse of the countenance of the brother who preceded him. At the gate of the governor's house there was a pause, and way was made for the chief to pass in first. He did so; and the next moment turned round in the vestibule to speak to Paul—but Paul had disappeared. Glancing

round, Toussaint saw Father Laxabon awaiting him at the foot of the staircase. Each advanced to the other. "Father, he is wretched," whispered Toussaint. "Bring me to him."

"Follow me," said the priest; and, instead of mounting the marble staircase, L'Ouverture and the father were seen to enter a passage, into which every one else was forbidden to follow. Father Laxabon tapped softly at a door, and was desired to enter. He opened it, and closed it behind Toussaint, keeping watch outside that the brothers might not be disturbed.

Paul started to his feet from the couch on which he had thrown himself. He stood waiting. Now was the decisive moment, and Toussaint knew it was. Yet he stood speechless.

"I left my son in your charge," said Paul, at length.

"You did; and I—"

"And you murdered him."

"No, Paul! I executed justice upon him. Hear me, brother, once for all. I am heart-broken for you as a brother, but as a magistrate I will admit no censure. As his father in your stead, I was, as the event has proved, too ambitious for him; but as a ruler, I did but my duty."

"Yes! You have been ambitious! You have chosen your duty!"

"My ambition was for him, Paul. As for my duty—remember that I too have a child whom, by that act, I doomed to worse than death."

"You see what liberty has brought to us. Look at the family of Ouverture; consider what has befallen since your struggle for liberty began; and then, perhaps, you will give over struggling. Welcome the French—go back to Breda—send me home to my hut on the shore, that I may die in such peace as is left to a childless man. Why do you not answer me, Toussaint? Why will you not give us a last chance of peace? I must obey you at the city gate, but I will importune you here. Why will you not do as I say?"

"Because I know that some—and the Ouvertures among them—were not born to live at ease—to pass their days in peace. I feel that some—and the Ouvertures among them—are born to suffer—to struggle and to die for their race. If you would know why, ask their Creator. I myself would fain know why. Meantime, the will of God is so clear, that I have devoted, not myself only, but my children. My sons, you know—"

"And not your children only, but your brother and his child."

"No. Moyses cast himself away. And as for you, your hut still stands, as you say. Go to it if you will, or make friends with the French if you desire to be a slave again. You have suffered too much by me for me to ask you ever to serve me more. I shall never desire you to dedicate yourself anew to pain in this crisis. Go and seek for ease. I shall incessantly pray that you may find it."

"I shall not seek what is not to be found, Toussaint. I have never dared wretchedness as you have; but, since I am and must be wretched, I will be an Overture. Your eye and your voice make me an Overture again, even yet. Give me your commands."

"Read this proclamation with the eye of an Overture. Well! Do you like it? How do you understand it?"

"You declare your allegiance to France, declaring, at the same time, its limits, and appealing to your soldiers in the event of aggression. It is plain, from this, that you mean to defend yourself and anticipate war."

"It is well. That is what I intend to convey. You will publish this proclamation in your city and district, under date of this 18th of December, 1801. You will then concert with General Clerveaux the measures for the defense of this city, and report your decisions to me on my return from Cap Samana. Shall it be so, brother?"

"Be it so."

"And we are friends?"

"We are fellow-citizens—we are Ouvertures, and therefore faithful. I shall not betray you."

"That is all I can ask, I know. We are old men, Paul. Fidelity for a while! Beyond the grave, perhaps more."

"You are going already?"

"To Cap Samana, and alone. Farewell!"

CHAPTER XXVII.

ALL EYE.

DAY by day, in the intervals of his occupation about the defense of the colony, did Toussaint repair to Cap Samana, to look eastward over the sea. Day by day was he more sure, from the information that reached him, that the French could not be far off. At length he desired that his generals should be within call from Cotuy, a small town which stood on the banks of the Cotuy, near the western base of the mountainous promontory of Samana—promontory at low water, island at high tide.

All was yet dark on the eastern point of this mountain on the morning of the 28th of December, when two watchmen, who had passed the night under the ferns in a cleft of the steep, came out to look abroad. On their mountain all was yet dark; for the stars overhead, though still rolling clear and golden—visible orbs in the empty depths of the sky—were so far dimmed by the dawn in the east as no longer to send down their shafts of light upon the earth. The point on which these watchmen stood was so high, that between them and the horizon the sea lay like half a world—an immeasurable expanse, spreading as if from a vast depth below up into the very sky. Dim and soundless lay the mass of waters; breaking, no doubt, as for ages past, against the rocky precipice below, but not so as to be heard upon the steep. It

might have appeared dead, but that a ray from some quarter of the heaven, capriciously touching its surface, showed that it was heaving, as was its wont. Eastward, at the point of junction of sea and sky, a dusky yellow light shone through the haze of morning, as behind a curtain, and told that the sun was on his way. As their eyes became accustomed to the diim light (which was darkness compared to that which had visited their dreams among the ferns), the watchmen alternately swept the expanse with their glass, and pronounced that there was not a sail in sight.

"I believe, however, that this will be our day; the wind is fair for the fleet," said Toussaint to Henri. "Go and bathe while I watch."

"We have said for a week past that each would be the day," replied Henri. "If it be to-day, however, they can hardly have a fairer for the first sight of the Paradise which poets and ladies praise at the French court. It promises to be the loveliest day of the year. I shall be here again before the sun has risen."

And Christophe retired to bathe in the water-fall which made itself heard from behind the ferns, and was hidden by them; springing, as they did, to a height of twenty feet and upward. To the murmur and gush of this waterfall the friends had slept. An inhabitant of the tropics is so accustomed to sound, that he can not sleep in the midst of silence; and on these heights there would have been everlasting silence but for the voice of waters, and the thunders and their echoes in the season of storms.

When both had refreshed themselves, they took their seat on some broken ground on the verge of the precipice, sometimes indulging their full minds with silence, but continually looking abroad over the now brightening sea. It was becoming of a deeper blue as the sky grew lighter, except at that point of the east where earth and heaven seemed to be kindling with a mighty fire. There the haze was glowing with purple and crimson; and there was Henri intently watching for the first golden spark of the sun, when Toussaint touched his shoulder and pointed to the northward. Shading his eyes with his hand, Christophe strove to penetrate the gray mists which had gathered there.

"What is it?" said he; "a sail? Yes: there is one—three—four!"

"There are seven," said Toussaint.

Long did he gaze through the glass at these seven sail, and then he reported an eighth. At this moment his arm was grasped.

"See! see!" cried Christophe, who was looking southward.

From behind the distant south-eastern promontory Del Enganno now appeared sail after sail to the number of twenty.

"All French," observed Christophe. "Lend me the glass."

"All French," replied his friend. "They are, no doubt, coming to rendezvous at this point."

While Henri explored those which were nearest, Toussaint leaned on his folded arms against the bank of broken ground before him, straining his eyes over the now-peopled sea.

"More! More!" he exclaimed, as the sun appeared, and the new gush of light showed sail upon sail, as small specks upon the horizon line. He snatched the glass, and neither he nor Henri spoke for long.

The east wind served the purposes of the vast fleet, whose three detachments, once within each other's view, rapidly converged, showing that it was indeed their object to rendezvous at Cap Samana. Silent, swift, and most fair (as is the wont of evil) was this form of destruction in its approach.

Not a word was spoken as the great ships of the line bore majestically up toward their point, while the lighter vessels skimmed the sea, as in sport, and made haste in, as if racing with one another, or anxious to be in waiting to welcome their superiors. Nearer and nearer they closed in, till the waters seemed to be covered with the foe. When Toussaint was assured that he had seen them all—when he had again and again silently counted over the fifty-four ships of war—he turned to his friend with a countenance of anguish such as even that friend of many years had never seen. •

"Henri," said he, "we must all perish. All France has come to St. Domingo!"

"Then we will perish," replied Henri.

"Undoubtedly: it is not much to perish, if that were all. But the world will be the worse forever. France is deceived. She comes, in an error, to avenge herself and to enslave the blacks. France had been deceived."

"If we were but all together," said Henri, "so that there were no moments of weakness to fear—if your sons were but with us—"

"Fear no moments of weakness from me," said Toussaint, his wonted fire now glowing in his eye. "My color imposes on me duties above nature; and while my boys are hostages, they shall be to me as if they no longer existed."

"They may possibly be on board this fleet," said Christophe. "If by caution we could obtain possession of them—"

"Speak no more of them now," said Toussaint. Presently, as if thinking aloud, and with his eyes still bent on the moving ships, he went on:

"No, those on board those ships are not boys, with life before them, and eager alike for arts and arms. I see who they are that are there. There are the troops of the Rhine—troops that have conquered a fairer river than our Artibonite, storming the castles on her steeps, and crowning themselves from her vineyards. There are the troops of the Alps—troops that have soared above the eagle, and stormed the clouds, and plucked the ice-king by the beard upon his throne. There are the troops of Italy—troops that have trodden the

old Roman ways, and fought over again the old Roman wars; that have drunk of the Tiber, and once more conquered the armies of the Danube. There are the troops of Egypt—troops that have heard the war-cry of the desert tribes, and encamped in the shadow of the Pyramids."

"Yet he is not afraid," said Henri to himself, as he watched the countenance of his friend.

"All these," continued Toussaint, "all these are brought hither against a poor, depressed, insulted, ignorant race; brought as conquerors, eager for the spoil before a blow is struck. They come to disembarrass our Paradise of us, as they would clear a fragrant and fruitful wood of apes and reptiles. And, if they find that it takes longer than they supposed to crush and disperse us, France has more thousands ready to come and help. The laborer will leave his plow at a word, and the vine-dresser his harvest, and the artisan his shop; France will pour out the youth of all her villages, to seize upon the delights of the tropics and the wealth of the savages, as they are represented by the emigrants who will not take me for a friend, but eat their own hearts far away with hatred and jealousy. All France is coming to St. Domingo!"

"But—" interposed Christophe.

"But, Henri," interrupted his friend, laying his hand on his shoulder, "not all France, with her troops of the Rhine, of the Alps, of the Nile, nor with all Europe to help her, can extinguish the soul of Africa. That soul, when once the soul of a man and no longer that of a slave, can overthrow the Pyramids and the Alps themselves, sooner than be again crushed down into slavery."

"With God's help," said Christophe, crossing himself.

"With God's help," repeated Toussaint. "See here," he continued, taking up a handful of earth from the broken ground on which they stood, "see here what God has done! See, here are shells from the depth of yonder ocean lying on the mountain top. Can not He who thus uprears the dust of his ocean floor, and lifts it above the clouds, create the societies of men anew, and set their lowest order but a little below the stars?"

"He can," said Christophe, again crossing himself.

"Then let all France come to St. Domingo! She may yet be undeceived.—What now?" he resumed, after a pause of observation. "What manœuvre is this?"

The ships, almost before they had drawn together, parted off again; nearly two-thirds retiring to the north, and the rest southward.

"They are doing as we supposed they would," said Christophe; "preparing to attack Cap François and our southern or western towns at once; perhaps both St. Domingo and Port-au-Prince."

"Be it so: we are ready for them," replied

Toussaint. "But now there is no time to lose. To Cotuy to give our orders, and then all to our posts!"

Once more he took a survey of the vast fleet in its two divisions, and then spread his arms in the direction of his chief cities, promising the foe to be ready to meet them there. In another moment he was striding down the mountain.

His generals were awaiting him at Cotuy; the horses of the whole party were saddled.

"The French are come?" they asked.

"The French are come in great force. Fifty-four ships of war, carrying probably ten or twelve thousand men."

"We have twenty thousand regular troops," cried Dessalines. "The day of the proud French has arrived!"

L'Ouverture's calm eye checked his exultation.

"Ten or twelve thousand of the élite of the armies of France," said Toussaint, "are sailing along our shores, and large re-enforcements may be following. Our twenty thousand troops are untried in the field against a European foe; but our cause is good. Let us be bold, my friends; but the leaders of armies must not be presumptuous."

All uncovered their heads, and waited only his dismissal.

"General Christophe, Cap Français and its districts are waiting for you. Let the flames of the city give us notice when the French land."

Christophe embraced his friend and was gone.

"General Dessalines, to your command in the west! Preserve your line of messengers from Léogane to my gate at Pongaudin, and let me not want for tidings."

The tramp of Dessalines's horse next died away.

"General La Plume, it is probable that your eye will have to be busier than your hands. You will be ever ready for battle, of course; but remember that I rely on you for every point of the south-west being watched, from Léogane round to Aux Cayes. Send your communications through Dessalines's line of scouts."

La Plume withdrew, and Toussaint gazed after him in reverie till he was out of sight.

"And I?" said Clerveaux, the only general officer now left in attendance.

"Your pardon, General Clerveaux. This your department in the east is likely at present to remain tranquil, as I forewarned you. I now forewarn you that it may hereafter become the seat of war, when you will have your day. Meantime, I may at any time call upon your reserve; and you will take care that the enemy shall find no solace in your department if they should visit it. Let it be bare as the desert before them. Farewell! I leave you in command of the east."

Cleveaux made his obeisance with an alac-

rity which caused Toussaint to say to himself as he mounted,

"Is he glad that the hour is come, or that his post is in the rear of the battle?"

Toussaint's own road lay homeward, where he had assembled the choicest troops, to be ready for action on any point where they might first be wanted; and where the great body of the cultivators, by whom his personal influence was most needed, were collected under his eye. As he now sped like the lightning through the shortest tracks, his trompettes proclaiming the invasion through all the valleys and over all the plains as they went, he felt strong and buoyant in heart like the eagle overhead, which was scared from its eyrie in Cibao by the proclamation of war. Forever as he rode, the thought recurred to fire his soul:

"He is my rival now, and no longer my chief. I am free. It is his own act; but Bonaparte has me for a rival now."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

MANY GUESTS.

FOR some weeks after the appearance of the fleet upon the coast, nothing took place which could be called war. Toussaint was resolved not to be the aggressor. Prepared at all points, he waited till those whom he still regarded as his fellow-citizens should strike the first blow. He was the more willing to leave an opening for peace till the last, that he heard that ladies were on board—ladies from the court of France, come to enjoy the delights of this tropical paradise. The sister of Bonaparte, Madame Leclerc, the wife of the commander of the expedition, was there. It seemed scarcely conceivable that she and her train of ladies could have come with any expectation of witnessing such a warfare as, ten years before, had shown how much more savage than the beasts of the forest men may be. It was as little conceivable that they could expect the negroes to enter into slavery again at a word, after having enjoyed freedom and held rule for ten years. There must still be hope of peace; and Toussaint spared no effort to preserve it, till the strangers should declare their intentions by some unequivocal act.

For this object L'Ouverture appeared gifted with ubiquity. No flying Arab was ever in so many places so nearly at once. Pongaudin, like every other estate which was in friendly hands, was a sort of camp. Here the commander-in-chief and his officers had their headquarters, and here he was to be found at intervals of a few hours. During those intervals he was inspecting the fortifications of St. Marc, one of the strongest places of the island, and under the charge of Dessalines; or he was looking over the bight of Léogane from behind Port-au-Prince; or he was visiting L'Etoile, made a strong post, and held by Charles Bel-

lair and his wife (for Deesha would not leave her husband); or he was riding through the Morne to the north, reanimating, with the sight of his beloved countenance, the companies there held in reserve. He was on the heights of the Gros Morne, an admiring spectator on occasion of that act of Christophe which was the real cause of the delay and indecision of Leclerc and his troops.

The main body of the French army was preparing to land immediately on its arrival at Cap Français, when Christophe sent his friend and brother-officer, Sangos, on board the fleet, to acquaint Leclerc with the absence of the commander-in-chief of the colony, without whose permission the landing of troops could not be allowed. If a landing by force were attempted, the city would immediately be fired, and the inhabitants withdrawn. General Leclerc could not believe this to be more than an empty threat, but thought it as well to avoid risk by landing in the night at points where he was not looked for. Accordingly, he sent some of his force on shore at Fort Dauphin, to the east; while he himself, with a body of troops, set foot on the fatal coast which he was never to leave, at *Le Limbé*, on the western side of the ridge which commanded the town, hoping to drop into the military quarter from the heights before he was looked for. From these heights, however, he beheld the town one mass of fire. Christophe had withdrawn the inhabitants, including two thousand whites, who were to be held as hostages in the interior; and so orderly and well-planned had been his proceedings, that not the slightest personal injury was sustained by any individual. Of this conflagration Toussaint had been a witness from the heights of Gros Morne. The horror which it occasioned was for the strangers alone. All the movable property of the citizens was safe in the interior, and they were all safe in person. The dismay was for the French, when they found only a burning soil, tumbling roofs, and tottering walls, where they had expected repose and feasting after the ennui of a voyage across the Atlantic. For the court ladies, there existed at present only the alternative of remaining on board the ships, of which they were heartily weary, and establishing themselves on the barren island of Tortuga, the home of the Buccaneers of former days. They shortly after took possession of Tortuga, which they found to be a tropical region indeed, but no Paradise. It was not the best season for turtle; and there was no other of the luxuries whose savor had reached the nostrils of the court of France.

Among the two thousand whites removed from Cap were, of course, the ladies of the convent. They were safely established under shelter of the fortifications of St. Marc, with all their little comforts about them, and their mocking-bird as tuneful as when hanging in its own orange-tree. Euphrosyne was not with them, nor yet with her guardian. M. Critois had enough to do to protect himself and his

lady; and he earnestly desired his ward to be thankful that she had friends among the ruling powers. Euphrosyne needed no commands on this head. She joined Madame Pascal, and was now with her and the secretary in the half-camp, half-household of Pongaudin.

Besides the family and establishment of the commander-in-chief, as many of the white gentry of Cap were accommodated as the country palace of Pongaudin would contain. It seemed doubtful how long they would have to find amusement for themselves there, for the invaders seemed to have fallen asleep. A month had passed since the burning of Cap, and not another step had been taken. Expectation had begun to relax; the ladies no longer shuddered at the bare idea of walking in the shrubberies; and some of the younger damsels had begun to need warnings from L'Ouverture himself not to go out of bounds—by no means to pass the line of sentinels in any direction. Instead of every thing French being spoken of with a faltering voice, any one was now welcome who might be able to tell, even at second or third hand, that Madame Leclerc had been seen, and what she wore, and how she looked, and what she had said, either about the colony or any thing else. The officers, both civil and military, found themselves able to devote their powers of entertainment more and more to the ladies; and the liability to be called off in the midst of the game of chess, the poem, the song, or the dance, seemed only to make their attentions more precious, because more precarious, than those of the guests who knew themselves to be hostages, and who had abundance of time for gallantry, if only they had had spirits and inclination. Most of the party certainly found the present position of affairs very dull. The exceptions were few. They were poor Génifrède, whose mind was wholly in the past, and before whose eyes the present went forward as a dim dream; her mother and sister, whose faculties were continually on the stretch to keep up, under such circumstances, the hospitalities for which they were pledged to so large a household; the secretary and his bride, who were engrossed at once with the crisis in public affairs and in their own; and Euphrosyne, who could find nothing dull after the convent, and who unconsciously wished that, if this were invasion and war, they might last a good while yet.

One evening, the 8th of February, was somewhat remarkable for L'Ouverture being, not only at home, but at leisure. He was playing billiards with his officers and guests. It followed, of course, that General Vincent was also present. It followed, of course; for, whether it was that Toussaint felt the peculiar interest in him which report made observers look for toward an intended son-in-law, or whether the chief distrusted him on account of his fondness for Paris and the First Consul, Vincent was forever kept under the eye and by the side of his general. Aimée was wont to sigh when

she heard her father's horse ordered, for she knew that Vincent was going too; and she now rejoiced to see her father at the billiard-table, for it told her that Vincent was her own for the evening.

Vincent was not slow in putting in his claim. At the first moment when they were unobserved, he drew her to the window, where the evening breeze blew in fragrant and cool—then into the piazza—then across the lawn—then down to the gate which opened upon the beach. He would have gone farther; but there Aimée stopped, reminding him of the general order against breaking bounds.

"That is all very well for the whites—and for us when the whites have their eyes upon us," said Vincent. "But we are not prisoners, and there is not a prisoner abroad to-night. Come—only as far as the mangroves! We shall not be missed; and if we should be, we can be within the gate in two minutes."

"I dare not," said Aimée, with a longing look, however, at the pearly sands and the creaming waves that now overspread them, now lapsed in the gleam of the moon. The dark shadow of the mangroves lay but a little way on. It was true that two minutes would reach them; but she still said "I dare not."

"Who is there?" cried the sentinel, in his march past the gate.

"No strangers, Claude. Any news on your watch?"

"None, mademoiselle."

"All quiet over toward St. Marc?" inquired Vincent.

"All quiet there, general, and everywhere else, when the last reports came round, ten minutes ago."

"Very well: pass on, good Claude. Come, come!" he said to Aimée; "who knows when we may have a moonlight hour again?"

He would not bide another refusal, but by gentle violence drew her out upon the beach, telling the sentinel, as they passed between him and the water, that if they were inquired for, he might call: they should be within hearing. Claude touched his cap, showed his white teeth in a broad smile, and did not object.

Once among the mangroves, Aimée could not repent. Their arched branches, descending into the water, trembled with every wave that gushed in among them, and stirred the mild air. The moonlight quivered on their dark green leaves, and on the transparent pool which lay among their roots.

"Now would you not have been sorry if I had not made you come?" said Vincent.

"If we could only stay—stay here forever!" she exclaimed, leaning back against the bush under which they sat. "Here, amidst the whispering of the winds and the dash of the waters, you would listen no more for the roll of the drum or the booming of cannon at St. Marc. I am weary of our life at Pongaudin."

"Weary of rumors of wars before we have the wars themselves, love."

"We can never hear any thing of my brothers while we are on these terms with France. Day after day comes on—day after day, and we have to toil, and plan, and be anxious—and our guests grow tired—and nothing is done—and we know that we can hear nothing of what we most want to learn. I am certain that my mother spends her nights in tears for her boys—and nothing is so likely to rouse poor Génifrède as the prospect of their coming back to us."

"And yourself, Aimée, can not be happy without Isaac."

"I never tried," said she. "I have daily felt his loss, because I wished never to cease to feel it."

"He is happier than you, dearest Aimée."

"Do not tell me that men feel such separations less than women, for I know it well already. I can never have been so necessary to him as he is to me: I know that well."

"Say 'was,' my Aimée. The time comes when sisters find their brothers less necessary to them than they have been."

"Such a time has never come to me, and I believe it never will. No one can ever be to me what Isaac has been."

"Has been"—true. But see how times have changed! Isaac has left off writing to you so frequently as he did—"

"No, no. He never did write frequently. It was never his habit to write as I wrote to him."

"Well, well. Whatever expectation may lie at the bottom of this little heart—whatever secret remonstrance for his silence—whatever dissatisfaction with his apologies—whatever mortification that such apologies were necessary—"

"How dare you—what right have you to pry into my heart?" exclaimed Aimée, withdrawing herself from her companion's side.

"The right of love," he replied, following till both were seated on the very verge of the water. "Can you suppose that I do not see your disappointment when L'Ouverture opens his dispatches, and there is not one of that particular size and fold which makes your countenance change when you see it? Can you suppose that I do not mark your happiness for hours and days after one of those closely-written sheets has come? happiness which makes me feel of no account to you—happiness which makes me jealous of my very brother—for my brother he is, as he is yours."

"It should not do that," replied Aimée, as she sat looking into the water. "You should not be angry at my being happy. If you have learned so much of my thoughts—"

"Say on! Oh, say on!"

"There is no need," said she, "if you can read the soul without speech, as you seem to profess."

"I read no thoughts but yours, and none of yours that relate to myself. I see at a glance every stir of your love to all besides. If you care for me, I need to hear it from yourself."

"If this quarrel comes to bloodshed, what will become of my brothers? If you love me, tell me that."

"Still these brothers!" cried Vincent, impatiently.

"And who should be inquired of concerning them, if not you? You took them to France—you left them there—"

"I was sent here by Bonaparte—put on the deputation by his express command. If not, I should not now have been here; I should have remembered you only as a child, and—"

"But Placide and Isaac! Suppose Leclerc and Rochambeau both killed—suppose Madame Leclerc entering once more into her brother's presence a mourning widow—what would Bonaparte do with Placide and Isaac? I am sure you have no comfort to give me, or you would not so evade what I ask."

"I declare—I protest you are mistaken. Bonaparte is every thing that is noble, and gracious, and gentle."

"You are sure of that?"

"Nay, why not? Have I not always said so? and you have delighted to hear me say so?"

"I should delight to believe it now. I will believe it; but yet, if he were really noble, how should this quarrel have arisen? For, if ever man was noble, and gracious, and gentle, my father is. If two such men come to open defiance, whose is the crime, and wherein does it lie?"

"If the world fall to pieces, Aimée, there can be no doubt of Bonaparte's greatness. What majesty he carries with him through all his conquests! How whole nations quail under his magnificent proclamations!"

"Are they really fine? I have seen but few; and they—"

"Are they not all grand? That proclamation in Egypt, for instance, in which he said he was the Man of Fate who had been foretold in the Koran, and that all resistance was impious and vain! If it had not happened four years before Bonaparte went to Egypt, I should have thought your father—"

"I was just thinking of that. But there is a great difference. It was not my father, but Laveaux, who said that the black chief predicted by Raynal had appeared. And it was originally said, not as a Divine prophecy, but because, in the natural course of things, the redeemer of an oppressed race must arise. Besides, my father says nothing but what he believes; and I suppose Bonaparte did not believe what he was saying."

"Do you think not? For my part, I believe his very words—that to oppose him is impious and vain."

"Heaven pity us if that be true! Was it not in that proclamation that Bonaparte said that men must account to him for their secret thoughts, as nothing was concealed from him?"

"Yes; just as L'Ouverture told the mulattoes in the church at Cap, that, from the other

side of the island, his eye would be upon them, and his arm stretched out to restrain or punish. He almost reached Bonaparte's strain there."

"I like my father's words the best, because all understood and believed what he said. Bonaparte may claim to read secret thoughts; but before my father men have no secret thoughts; they love him so that their minds stand open."

"Then those Italian proclamations, and letters to the Directory," said Vincent; "how they grew in grandeur, as city after city, and state after state, fell before him! When he summoned Pavia to open her gates to him after her insurrection, how imperious he was! If he had found that a drop of French blood had been shed, he declared not a stone of the city should have remained; but a column should arise in its place, bearing the inscription, 'Here once stood Pavia!' There spoke the man who held the ages in his hand, ready to roll them over the civilized world; to crumble cities and overthrow nations in case of resistance to his will! How Paris rang with acclamations when these words passed from mouth to mouth! He was worshiped as a god."

"It is said," sighed Aimée, "that Leclerc has proclamations from him for our people. I wonder what they are, and how they will be received?"

"With enthusiasm, no doubt. When and where has it been otherwise? You shudder, my Aimée; but, trust me, there is inconceivable folly in the idea of opposing Bonaparte. As he said in Egypt, it is impious and vain. Trust me, love, and decide accordingly."

"Desert my father and my family in their hour of peril! I will not do that."

"There is no peril in the case, love. It is glory and happiness to live under Bonaparte. My life upon it, he will do your father no injury, but continue him in his command under certain arrangements: and as for the blacks, they and the whites will join in one common enthusiasm for the conqueror of Europe. Let us be among the first, my Aimée! Be mine; and we will go to the French forces, among my friends there. It is as if we were called to be mediators. It is as if the welfare of your family and of the colony were, in a measure, consigned to our hands. Once married, and with Leclerc, how easily may we explain away causes of quarrel! How completely shall we make him understand L'Ouverture! And how, through us, Leclerc can put your father in possession of the views of Bonaparte! Oh, Aimée, be mine, and let us go!"

"And if it were otherwise—if it came to bloodshed—to deadly warfare?"

"Then, love, you would least of all repent. Alone and desolate—parted from your brothers—parted from me—"

"From you, Vincent?"

"Assuredly. I can never unsheath my sword against those to whom my attachment

is strong. I can never fight against an army from Paris—troops that have been led by Bonaparte."

"Does my father know that?"

"He can not know me if he anticipates any thing else. I execute his orders at present because I admire his system of government, and am anxious that it should appear to the best advantage to the brother-in-law of the First Consul. Thus I am confident that there will be no war. But, love, if there should be, you will be parted forever from your brothers and from me by remaining here; you will never again see Isaac. Nay, nay! No tears! no terrors, my Aimée! By being mine, and going with me to that place where all are happy—to Paris—you will, through my interest, best aid your father; and Isaac and I will watch over you forever."

"Not a word more, Vincent! You make me wretched. Not a word more till I have spoken to my father. He must, he will tell me what he thinks, what he expects, whether he fears. Hark! There are horsemen!"

"Can it be? Horsemen approaching on this side? I will look out."

"No, no! Vincent, you shall not go—"

Her terror was so great that Vincent could not indeed leave her. As the tramp of a company of horsemen became almost lost on quitting the hard road for the deep sand, he dropped his voice, whispering in her ear that she was quite safe, completely hidden under the mangroves, and that he would not leave her. She clasped his hand with both hers to compel him to keep his word, and implored him not to speak—not to shake a leaf of their covert.

The company passed very near—so near as that the sand thrown up by the horses' feet pattered among the foliage of the mangroves. No one of the strangers was then speaking; but in another moment the sentry challenged them. They laughed, and were certainly stopping at the little gate.

"We know your master, fellow," said one. "We have had more talk with him in one day than you in all your service."

"I am sure I ought to know that voice," whispered Aimée, drawing a long breath.

The strangers were certainly intending to pass through the gate into the grounds, and the sentry was remonstrating. In another moment he fired, as a signal. There was some clamor and laughter, and Aimée started as at a voice from the grave.

"That is Isaac's voice!" she exclaimed, springing from her seat. It was now Vincent's turn to hold her hands, or she would have been out in the broad moonlight in an instant.

"Stay, love! Stay one moment," he entreated. "I believe you are right; but let me look out."

She sank down on the sand while he reconnoitred. At the moment of his looking forth, a young man, who, he was certain, was Placide, was good-humoredly taking the sentry by the

shoulders and pushing him from his place, while saying something in his ear, which made the poor soldier toss his hat in the air, and run forward to meet his comrades, whom the sound of his gun was bringing from every direction over the sands.

"It is they, indeed," said Vincent. "Your brothers are both there."

While he was speaking, Aimée burst from the covert, made her way miraculously through the gathering horses and men, pushed through the gate, leaving her lover some way behind, flew like a lapwing through the shrubbery and across the lawn, and was hanging on her brother's neck before the news of the arrival was understood within the house.

There was no waiting till father and mother could choose where to meet their children. The lads followed the messenger into the salon, crowded as it was with strangers. L'Ouverture's voice was the first heard after the sudden hush.

"Now Heaven bless Bonaparte for this," he cried, "and make him a happy father!"

"Hear him, O God! and bless Bonaparte!" sobbed Margot.

A check was given to their words and their emotions by seeing by whom the young men were accompanied. Thérèse was leading forward Génifrède, when she stopped short with a sort of groan, and returned to her seat, forgetful at the moment even of Génifrède—for M. Papalier was there. Other gentlemen were of the company. The one whom the young men most punctiliously introduced to their father was M. Coasson, the tutor, guardian, or envoy under whose charge General Leclere had sent them home.

Toussaint offered him a warm welcome as the guardian of his sons; but M. Coasson himself seemed most impressed with his office of envoy, as did the gentlemen who accompanied him. Assuming the air of an ambassador, and looking round him as if to require the attention of all present, M. Coasson discharged himself of his commission as follows:

"General Toussaint—"

"They will not acknowledge him as L'Ouverture," observed Thérèse to Madame Pascal and Génifrède. Afra's eyes filled with tears. Génifrède was absorbed in contemplating her brothers—both grown manly, and the one looking the soldier, the other the student.

"General Toussaint," said Coasson, "I come, the bearer of a letter to you from the First Consul."

In his hand was now seen a gold box, which he did not, however, deliver at the moment.

"With it I am commissioned to offer the greetings of General Leclere, who awaits with anxiety your arrival at his quarters as his lieutenant-general."

"Upon what does General Leclere ground his expectation of seeing me there?"

"Upon the ground of the command of the First Consul, declared in his proclamation to

the inhabitants of St. Domingo, and, no doubt, more fully in this letter to yourself."

Here he delivered the box, desiring that the presence of himself and his companions might be no impediment to General Toussaint's reading his dispatches.

Toussaint had no intention that they should be any hinderance. He read and re-read the letter, while all eyes but those of Aimée were fixed upon his countenance. With an expression of the quietest satisfaction, she was gazing upon her brothers, unvexed by the presence of numbers and the transaction of state business. They were there, and she was happy.

Those many eyes failed to discover any thing from the countenance of Toussaint. It was immovable; and M. Coasson was so far disappointed. It had been his object to prevent the dispatches which he brought from being read in private, that he might be enabled to report how they were received. He had still another resource. He announced that he had brought with him the proclamation of the First Consul to the inhabitants at large of St. Domingo. As it was a public document, he would, with permission, read it aloud. Toussaint now looked round to command attention to the words of the Ruler of France. Vincent sought to exchange glances with Aimée; but Aimée had none to spare. M. Papalier had unceremoniously entered into conversation with some of the guests of his own complexion, and did not cease upon any hint, declaring to those about him that none of this was new to him, as he was in the counsels of Bonaparte in all St. Domingo affairs. The tone of their conversation was, however, reduced to a low murmur while M. Coasson read aloud the following proclamation:

"Paris, Nov. 8, 1801.

"INHABITANTS OF ST. DOMINGO,—Whatever your origin or your color, you are all French: you are all equal and all free before God and before the Republic.

"France, like St. Domingo, has been a prey to factions, torn by intestine commotions and foreign wars. But all has changed: all nations have embraced the French, and have sworn to them peace and amity; the French people have embraced each other, and have sworn to be all friends and brothers. Come also, embrace the French, and rejoice to see again your European friends and brothers!

"The Government sends you the Captain-general Leclerc. He has brought—"

Here M. Coasson's voice and manner became extremely emphatic.

"He has brought sufficient force for protecting you against your enemies, and against the enemies of the Republic. If you are told that these forces are destined to violate your liberties, reply, 'The Republic will not suffer them to be taken from us.'

"Rally round the captain-general. He brings you abundance and peace. Rally all of you around him. Whoever shall dare sepa-

rate himself from the captain-general will be a traitor to his country; and the indignation of the country will devour him, as the fire devours your dried canes.

"Done at Paris," etc.

"This document is signed, you will perceive," said M. Coasson, "by the First Consul, and by the secretary of state, M. H. B. Maret."

Once more it was in vain to explore the countenance of L'Ouverture. It was still immovable. He extended his hand for the document, saying that he would retire with his secretary for the purpose of preparing his replies for the First Consul, in order that no such delays might take place on his part as the date of the letter and proclamation showed to have intervened on the other side. Meantime, he requested that M. Coasson, and all whom he had brought in his company, would make themselves at home in his house; and, turning to his wife and family, he commended his newly-arrived guests to their hospitality. With a passing smile and greeting to his sons, he was about to leave the room with M. Pascal, when M. Coasson intimated that he had one thing more to say.

"I am directed, General Toussaint," said he, in case of your refusal to join the French forces immediately, to convey your sons back to the guardianship of the Captain-general Leclerc; and it will be my duty to set out with them at dawn."

A cry of anguish broke forth from Margot, and Placide was instantly by her side.

"Fear nothing," said Toussaint to her, in a tone which once more fixed all eyes upon him. His countenance was no longer unmoved. It was convulsed for a moment with passion. He was calm in his manner, however, as he turned to M. Coasson and said,

"Sir, my sons are at home. It rests with myself and with them what excursions they make henceforth."

He bowed, and left the room with M. Pascal.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE HOUR OF PROOF.

"So the long-expected letter is come at last," observed M. Pascal, as the study-door closed upon himself and his friend.

"Read it," said Toussaint, putting the letter into the secretary's hand, and walking up and down the room till his friend spoke again.

"We hear," said M. Pascal, "that the First Consul understands men. He may understand some men—the soldiery of France, perhaps—but of others he knows no more than if he were not himself a man."

"He no more understands my people than myself. Can it be possible that he believes that proclamation will be acceptable to them—that mixture of cajolery and bombast? He has

heard that we are ignorant, and he concludes that we are without understanding. What think you of his promise of abundance by the hands of Leclere? As if it were not their cupidity, excited by our abundance, which has brought these thousands of soldiers to our shores! They are welcome to it all—to our harvests, our money, and our merchandise, if they would not touch our freedom.”

“Bonaparte has a word to say to that in his letter to you,” observed the secretary. “What can you desire? The freedom of the blacks? You know that in all the countries we have been in, we have given it to the people who had it not! What say the Venetians to that? What says the pope?”

“Does he suppose us deaf,” replied Toussaint, “that we have not heard of the fate of our race in Guadaloupe, and Martinique, and Cayenne? Does he suppose us blind, that we do not see the pirates he has commissioned hovering about the shores of Africa, as the vulture preparing to strike his prey? Ignorant as we are, does he suppose us stupid enough to be delighted when, free already, we find ourselves surrounded by fifty-four war-ships, which come to promise us liberty?”

“He does not know, apparently, how our commerce with the world brings us tidings of all the world.”

“And if it were not so—if his were the first ships that our eyes had ever seen—does he not know that the richest tidings of liberty come not through the eye and ear, but from the heart? Does he not know that the liberties of St. Domingo, large as they are, everlasting as they will prove to be, all sprang from here and here?” pointing to his head and heart. “This is he,” he continued, “who has been king in my thoughts from the hour when I heard of the artillery officer who had saved the Convention! This is he to whom I have felt myself bound as a brother in destiny and in glory! This is he with whom I hoped to share the lot of reconciling the quarrel of races and of ages! In the eye of the world he may be great, and I the bandit captain of a despised race. On the page of history he may be magnified and I derided. But I spurn him for a hero, I reject him for a brother. My rival he may make himself. His soul is narrow, and his aims are low. He might have been a god to the world, and he is a tyrant. We have followed him with wistful eyes, to see him loosen bonds with a divine touch; and we find him busy forging new chains. He has sullied his divine commission; and, while my own remains pure, he is no brother of my soul. You, my friend, knew him better than I, or you would not have left his service for mine.”

“Yet I gave him credit for a better appreciation of you—a clearer foresight of the destiny of this colony than he has shown.”

“While we live, my friend, we must expect disappointment. In my youth I learned to give up hope after hope; and one of the brightest I must now relinquish in my old age.”

“Two brilliant ones have, however, entered your dwelling this evening, my friend,” said the secretary.

“My boys! Are they not— But these are times to show what they are. In the joy of having them back, I might have forgiven and forgotten every thing but for the claim— You heard, Pascal?”

“About their leaving you at dawn. Yes: that was amusing.”

“If they will not consider a negro a man, they might have remembered that beasts are desperate to recover the young that they have lost. Leclere will find, however, that this night will make men of my sons. I will call them my boys no more; and never more shall this envoy call them his pupils or his charge. These French will find that there is that in this St. Domingo of ours which quickly ripens young wits, and makes the harvest ready in a day. Let them beware the reaping; for it is another sort of harvest than they look for. But come,” said he; “it is late; and we have to answer the letter of this foreigner—this stranger to my race and nature.”

He took some papers from his pocket, sat down beside his friend, and said, with the countenance of one who has heard good news,

“See here how little they comprehend how negroes may be friends! See here the proofs that they understand my Henri no better than myself.”

And he put into the hands of his secretary those fine letters of Christophe, which do everlasting honor to his head and heart, and show that he bore a kingly soul before he adorned the kingly office. As M. Pascal read the narrative of Leclere’s attempts to alarm, to cajole, and to bribe Christophe to betray his friend’s cause and deliver up his person, the pale countenance of the secretary became, now paler with anger and disgust, now flushed with pleasure and admiration.

“Here is the friend that sticketh closer than a brother,” said he.

“Alas! poor Paul! he will be faithful, Pascal; but he can never again love me.”

“Pardon me, I entreat you. I meant no allusion.”

“You did not. But every thing serves as an allusion there; for Paul is never out of my mind. Now for our letters: that to Leclere modified, as you perceive, by our knowledge of what has passed between him and Henri.”

“Modified, indeed!” exclaimed Pascal.

Their proceedings were destined to be further modified by the events of this night. Tidings as black as the darkest night that ever brooded over the island in the season of storms poured in to overshadow the prospects of the negroes and the hopes of their chief.

It was after midnight, when, in the midst of their quiet consultation, Toussaint and his secretary thought they heard voices at the gate. Toussaint was going to ascertain, when he was met in the hall by news that a messenger from

the south-west had arrived. The messenger entered, halting and slow.

"It is—no," said Pascal, "surely it can not be—"

"Is it possible that you are Jacques?" exclaimed Toussaint, his eyes shaded by his hand.

"I am Dessalines," said the wounded man, who had already sunk upon a seat.

"Why come yourself in this state?" cried Toussaint, hastening to support him.

"I could more easily come than write my news," replied Dessalines: "and it is news that I would commit to no man's ear but your own."

"Shall I go?" asked M. Pascal of Toussaint.

"No. Stay and hear. Tell us your tidings, Jacques."

"I am as well here as down in the south-west, or you would not have seen me."

"You mean that all is lost there?"

"All is lost there."

"While the enemy is beguiling us with letters and talk of truce!" observed Toussaint to Pascal. "Where was your battle, Jacques? How can all the west be lost?"

"The French have bought La Plume. They told him your cause was desperate, and promised him honors and office in France. Get me cured, and let me win a battle for you, and I have no doubt I can buy him back again. Meantime—"

"Meantime, what has Damage done? Is he with me or La Plume? And is Chaney safe?"

"Damage never received your instructions. La Plume carried them, and, no doubt, your aid-de-camp also, straight to the French. Chaney has not been seen: he is traitor or prisoner."

"Then Cayes is not burned, nor Jeremie defended?"

"Neither the one nor the other. Both are lost, and so is Port-au-Prince. My troops and I did our best at the Croix des Bosquets; but what could we do in such a case? I am here, wounded within an inch of my life, and they are in the fastnesses. You were a doctor once, L'Ouverture. Set me up again, and I will gather my men from the mountains, and prick these whites all across the peninsula into the sea."

"I will be doctor, or nurse, or any thing to save you, Jacques."

"What if I have more bad news? Will you not hate me?"

"Lose no time, my friend. This is no hour for trifling."

"There is no room for trifling, my friend. I fear—I am not certain—but I fear the east is lost."

"Is Clerveaux bought too?"

"Not bought. He is more of your sort than La Plume's. He is incorruptible by money; but he likes the French, and he loves peace. He would be a very brother to you if he only loved liberty better than either. As it is, he is

thought to have delivered over the whole east, from the Isabella to Cap Samana, without a blow."

"And my brother?"

"He has disappeared from the city. He did not yield; but he could do nothing by himself, or with only his guard. He disappeared in the night, and is thought to have put off by water. You will soon hear from him, I doubt not. Now I have told my news, and I am faint. Where is Thérèse?"

"She is here. Look more like yourself, and she shall be called. You have told all your news?"

"All—and I am glad it is out."

"Keep up your heart, Dessalines! I have you and Henri; and God is with the faithful. Now to your bed, my friend."

Instead of the attendants who were summoned, Thérèse entered. She spoke no word, but, aided by her servant, had her husband carried to his chamber. When the door was closed, sad and serious as were the tidings which had now to be acted upon, the secretary could not help asking L'Ouverture if he had ever seen Madame Dessalines look as she did just now.

"Yes," he replied, "on certain occasions, some years since. But here she is again."

Thérèse came to say that her husband had yet something to relate into Toussaint's own ear before he could sleep; but, on her own part, she entreated that she might first be permitted to dress his wounds.

"Send for me when you think fit, and I will come, madame. But, Thérèse, one word. I am aware that M. Papalier is here. Do not forget that you are a Christian, and pledged to forgive injuries."

"You think you read my thoughts, L'Ouverture, but you do not. Listen, and I am gone. His voice once had power over me through love, and then through hatred. I never miss the lightest word he speaks. I heard him tell his old friends from Cap that I was his slave, and that the time was coming when masters would claim their own again. Now you know my thoughts."

And she was gone.

When Toussaint returned from his visit to Dessalines's chamber, he found M. Pascal sitting with his face hid in his hands.

"Meditation is good," said Toussaint, laying his hand on his friend's shoulder. "Lamentation is unworthy."

"It is so; and we have much to do," replied the secretary, rousing himself.

"Fear not," resumed Toussaint, "but that your bride will bloom in the air of the mountains. We may have to entrench ourselves in the Mornes, or, at least, to place there our ladies and the civil officers of the Government; but we ought to thank God for providing those natural homes, so full of health and beauty, for the free in spirit. I have still three brigades, and the great body of the cultivators, in re-

serve; but we shall act with stronger hearts if our heart's treasure is safe in the Mornes."

"Are we to lose Dessalines?" asked M. Pascal.

"I believe not. He is severely wounded, and, at this moment, exasperated. He vows the death of M. Papalier; and I vow his safety while he is my guest."

"Papalier and Madame Dessalines can not exist in one house."

"And therefore must this deputation be dismissed early in the morning, if there were no other reasons. Notice must be carried to them with their coffee that I am awaiting them with my replies. Those delivered, negotiation is at an end, and we must act. My foes have struck the blow which unties my hands."

"What has M. Papalier to do with the deputation?"

"Nothing, but that he uses its protection to attempt to resume his estates. They are in commission, and he may have them; though not, as he thinks, with men and women as part of his chattels. No more of him."

"Of whom next, then? Except Christophe, who is there worthy to be named by you?" asked M. Pascal, with emotion.

"Every one who has deserted us, except La Plume. He is sordid, and I dismiss him. As for Clerveaux and his thousands, they have been weak, but not perhaps wicked. They may be recovered. I take the blame of their weakness upon myself. Would that I alone could bear the consequences!"

"You take the blame of their weakness? Is not their former slavery the cause of it? Is there any thing in their act but the servility in which they were reared?"

"There is much of that. But I have deepened the taint, in striving to avoid the opposite corruption of revenge. I have the taint myself. The stain of slavery exists in the First of the Blacks himself. Let all others, then, be forgiven. They may thus be recovered. I gave them the lesson of loving and trusting the whites. They have done so, to the point of being treacherous to me. I must now give them another lesson, and time to learn it; and they may possibly be redeemed."

"You will hold out in the Mornes; conduct your resistance on a pinnacle, where the eyes of the blacks may be raised to you—fixed upon you."

"Just so; and where they may flock to me when time shall have taught them my principle and my policy, and revealed the temper and purpose of our invaders. Now, then, to prepare!"

Before dawn, the dispatches for the French, on the coast and at home, were prepared, and messengers were dismissed in every direction, with orders by which the troops which remained faithful would be concentrated, the cultivators raised and collected, stores provided in the fastnesses, and the new acquisitions of the enemy rendered useless to them. Never had the heads of these two able men, working in perfect con-

cert, achieved such a mass of work in a single night.

A little after sunrise the French party appeared in the salon, where already almost every member of the household was collected; all being under the impression that a crisis had arrived, and that memorable words were about to be spoken.

Toussaint acknowledged the apparent discourtesy of appointing the hour for the departure of his guests, but declared that he had no apology to offer; that the time for courteous observance was past, when his guests were discovered to be sent merely to amuse and disarm him for the hour, while blows were struck at a distance against the liberties of his race. In delivering his dispatches, he said, he was delivering his farewell. Within an hour the deputation and himself must be traveling in different directions.

M. Coasson, on receiving the packets, said that he had no other desire than to be on his way. They could be no satisfaction, and little safety, in remaining in a house where, under a hypocritical pretense of magnanimity and goodwill, there lurked a spirit of hideous malice, of diabolical revenge, toward a race to whom nature, and the universal consent of men, had given a superiority which they could never lose.

In unaffected surprise, Toussaint looked in the face of the envoy, observing that, for himself, he disclaimed all such passion and such dissimulation as his household was charged with.

"Of course you do," replied Coasson: "but I require not your testimony. The men of a family may, where there is occasion, conceal its ruling passion; but, where there is occasion, it will be revealed by the women."

Toussaint's eyes, like every one's else, turned to the ladies of his family. It was not Madame L'Ouverture that was intended, for her countenance asked of her husband what this could mean. It could not be Aimée, who now stood drowned in tears where she could best conceal her grief. Génifrède explained. She told calmly, and without the slightest confusion, that M. Coasson had sought a conversation with her, for the purpose of winning over her feelings, and her influence with her father, to the side of the French. He had endeavored to make her acknowledge that the whole family, with the exception of its head, were in favor of peace, admirers of Bonaparte, and aware that they were likely to be victims to the ambition of their father. Her reply, in which she declared that she gloried, was, that the deepest passion of her soul was hatred of the whites; and that she prayed for their annihilation.

"And did you also declare, my daughter," said Toussaint, "that in this you differ from us all? Did you avow that your parents look upon this passion in you as a disease, for which you have their daily and nightly prayers?"

"I did declare, my father, that I alone of the Ouvertures know how to feel for the wrongs

of my race. But M. Coasson did not believe me, and vowed that we should all suffer for the opinions held by me alone."

"It is true, I did not believe, nor do I now believe," said Coasson, "that the devil would single out one of a family, to corrupt her heart with such atrocious hatred as that whose avowal chilled the marrow of my bones. It was her countenance of wretchedness that attracted me. I saw that she was less capable of dissimulation than the rest of you, and so I have found."

"A wise man, truly, has the captain-general chosen for an envoy!" observed Toussaint: "a wise and an honorable man! He sees woe in the face of a woman, and makes it his instrument for discovering the secret souls of her family. Blindly bent upon this object, and having laid open, as he thinks, one heart, he reads the rest by it. But he may, with all this wisdom and all this honor, be no less ignorant than before he saw us. So far from reading all our souls, he has not even read the suffering one that he has tempted. You have opened the sluices of the waters of bitterness in my child's soul, M. Coasson, but you have not found the source."

"Time will show that," observed the envoy.

"It will," replied Toussaint; "and also the worth of your threat of revenge for the words of my suffering child. I have no more to say to you. My sons!"

Placide sprang to his side, and Isaac followed.

"I no longer call you my boys, for the choice of this hour makes you men. The captain-general insists that you go from me. He has no right to do so. Neither have I a right to bid you stay. Hear, and decide for yourselves. The cause of the blacks is not so promising as it appeared last night. News has arrived from various quarters of defeat and defection. Our struggle for our liberties will be fierce and long. It will never be relinquished; and my own conviction is, that the cause of the blacks will finally prevail—that St. Domingo will never more belong to France. The ruler of France has been a guardian to you—an indulgent guardian. I do not ask you to fight against him."

The faces of both the young men showed strong and joyful emotion; but it was not the same emotion in them both.

"Decide according to your reason and your hearts, my children, whether to go or stay, remembering the importance of your choice." Putting a hand on the shoulder of each, he said impressively, "Go to the captain-general, or remain with me. Whichever you do, I shall always equally love and cherish you."

Margot looked upon her sons as if awaiting from them life or death. Aimée's face was still hidden in her handkerchief. She had nothing to learn of her brothers' inclinations.

Isaac spoke before Placide could open his lips.

"We knew, father," he said, "that your love and your rare liberality—that liberality which gave us our French education—would

not fail now. And this it is that persuades me that this quarrel can not proceed to extremities—that it will not be necessary for your sons to take any part, as you propose. When Placide and I think of you—your love of peace, your loyalty, and your admiration of Bonaparte; and then, when we think of Bonaparte—his astonishment at what you have done in the colony, and the terms in which he always spoke of you to us—when we consider how you two are fitted to appreciate each other, we can not believe but that the captain-general and you will soon be acting in harmony, for the good of both races. But for this assurance, we could hardly have courage to return."

"Speak for yourself alone, Isaac," said his brother.

"Well, then: I say for myself, that, but for this certainty, it would almost break my heart to leave you so soon again, though to go at present no farther off than Tortuga. But I am quite confident that there will soon be perfect freedom of intercourse among all who are on the island."

"You return with me?" asked M. Coasson.

"Certainly, as my father gives me my choice. I feel myself bound, in honor and gratitude, to return, instead of appearing to escape, at the very first opportunity, from those with whom I can never quarrel. Returning to Leclerc, under his conditional orders, can never be considered a declaration against my father; while remaining here, against Leclerc's orders, is an undeniable declaration against Bonaparte and France—a declaration which I never will make."

"I stay with my father," said Placide.

"Your reasons?" asked M. Coasson; "that I may report them to the captain-general."

"I have no reasons," replied Placide; "or, if I have, I can not recollect them now. I shall stay with my father."

"Welcome home, my boy!" said Toussaint; "and Isaac, my son, may God bless you, wherever you go!"

And he opened his arms to them both.

"I am not afraid," said Madame L'Ouverture, timidly, as if scarcely venturing to say so much, "I am not afraid but that, happen what may, we can always make a comfortable home for Placide."

"Never mind comfort, mother, and least of all for me! We have something better than comfort to try for now."

"Give me your blessing too, father," said Aimée, faintly, as Isaac led her forward, and Vincent closely followed. "You said you would bless those that went and those that staid; and I am going with Isaac."

The parents were speechless; so that Isaac could explain that the captain-general offered a welcome to as many of the Oouvertures as were disposed to join him; and that Madame Leclerc had said that his sisters would find a home and protection with her.

"And I can not separate from Isaac yet,"

pleaded Aimée. "And with Madame Leclerc—"

"General Vincent," said Toussaint, addressing his aid before noticing his daughter, "have the goodness to prepare for an immediate journey. I will give you your commission when you are ready to ride."

After one moment's hesitation, Vincent bowed and withdrew. He was not prepared to desert his general while actually busy in his affairs. He reflected that the great object (in order to the peace and reconciliation he hoped for) was to serve and keep on a good understanding with both parties. He would discharge this commission, and then follow Aimée and her brother, as he had promised. Thus he settled with himself while he ordered his horses and prepared for departure.

Toussaint was sufficiently aware that he should prosper better without his shallow-minded and unstable aid; but he meant to retain him about his person, on business in his service, till Aimée should have opportunity, in his absence, to explore her own mind and determine her course while far from the voice of the tempter.

"Go with your brother, Aimée," he said, rather than "remain unwillingly with us. Whenever you wish it, return. You will find our arms ever open to you."

And he blessed her, as did her weeping mother; the last, however, not without a word of reproach.

"Oh, Aimée, why did not you tell me?"

"Mother, I did not know myself—I was uncertain—I was— Oh, mother! it will not be for long. It is but a little way; and Isaac and I shall soon write. I will tell you every thing about Madame Leclerc. Kiss me once more, mother, and take care of Génifrède."

As Toussaint abruptly turned away, with a parting bow to the envoy, and entered the piazza on his way to the urgent business of the day, and as the shortest escape from the many eyes that were upon him, he encountered M. Pascal, who stood awaiting him there.

"My friend!" said M. Pascal, with emotion, as he looked in the face of Toussaint.

"Ay, Pascal, it is bitter. Bonaparte rose up as my rival, and cheerfully did I accept him for such, in the council and in the field. But now he is my rival in my family. He looks defiance at me through my children's eyes. It is too much. God give me patience!"

M. Pascal did not speak: for what could he say?

CHAPTER XXX.

SPECULATION IN THE PLATEAUX.

PONGAUDIN was no longer safe as head-quarters for the commander-in-chief, his family, and guests. The defeats which had been sustained were bad enough, but the defection was worse. Amidst the contagion of defection,

there was no saying who, out of the circle of immediate friends, might next join the French for the sake of peace; and for the sake of peace, perhaps, deliver up the persons of the Overtures, with their wounded friend Dessalines, and the brave young officers who formed the guard of the household. Christophe's letters had already proved to Toussaint and his secretary that no reliance was to be placed on the honor of the French in their dealings with negroes. Cajolery in speech, covering plots against their persons, appeared to be considered the conduct appropriate to business with blacks, who had no concern, it seemed, with the usages of war, as established among whites. La Plume had fallen by bribery; Clerveaux by cajolery; and both means had been attempted with Christophe. The troops were assailed on the side of their best affections. They were told that Leclerc came to do honor to L'Overture—to thank him for his government of the island during the troubles of France—and to convey to him the approbation of the First Consul, in papers inclosed in a golden box. It is probable that, if they had not heard from Toussaint's own lips of the establishment of slavery in the other French colonies, the authorization of the slave-trade, and the threat to do what was convenient with St. Domingo, all the negroes would have made the French welcome, as Clerveaux had done. As it was, large numbers unquestionably remained faithful to their liberties and their chief; enough, as Toussaint never doubted, to secure their liberties at last; but how many, and after how long and arduous a struggle, it remained for time to show.

Many houses had been offered as a retreat for the household of the commander-in-chief. The one chosen this day was his friend Raymond's cacao-plantation, Le Zéphyr, in the Mornes du Chaos—among the mountains which retired above the right bank of the Artibonite. It was a spacious mansion, sheltered from storms, but enjoying a pleasant mountain air—the most wholesome that could be found, if the retreat should continue through the hot season. It was surrounded with never-failing springs of pure water. There were kids on all the hills, and cattle in every valley round. Grain and fruits were in the fields and gardens; and it was thought that one well-guarded post, at a pass below the Plateaux de la Ravine, would render the place inaccessible to the enemy. To the satisfaction of Raymond and his daughter, and the delight of Euphrosyne, this, their beloved summer mansion, was fixed on for the abode of the whole party, provided Toussaint should find, on examination, that it would answer his purposes as well as was now supposed.

Such was the plan settled presently after the deputation had left the gates—settled among the few confidential friends whose tastes, as well as interests, Toussaint chose to consult. Madame Dessalines was among these, and one

of the most eager to be gone. She engaged to remove her husband safely to a place where his recovery must proceed better than among the agitations of Pongaudin. By one of these agitations her desire to go had been much quickened. Before the departure of the deputation she had chanced to meet M. Papalier in one of the corridors, equipped for his journey. She could not avoid passing him; and he had greeted her with a significant "An revoir, Thérèse." Fervently she prayed that she might never meet him again; and anxious was she to be gone to a place where he could not come.

Before noon, L'Ouverture, with Placide riding by his side, and followed by some officers, who were themselves followed by a few soldiers, was among the heights which commanded the plain of the Artibonite on one side, and on the other the valleys which lay between their party and the Gros Morne. They had visited Le Zéphyr, and were now about to examine the pass where their post was to be established.

"This heat, Placide," said his father, as the sun beat down upon their heads, "is it not too much for you? Perhaps you had better—But I beg your pardon," he added, smiling; "I had forgotten that you are no longer my growing boy, Placide, whom I must take care of. I beg your pardon, Placide; but it is so new to me to have a manly son beside me—"

And he looked at him with eyes of pride.

Placide told how often at Paris he had longed to bask in such a sunshine as this, tempered by the fragrant breezes from the mountain side. He was transported now to hear the blows of the axe in the woods, and the shock of the falling trunks, as the hewers of the logwood and the mahogany trees were at their hidden work. He was charmed with the songs of the cultivators which rose from the hot plain below, where they were preparing the furrows for the indigo-sowing. He greeted every housewife who, with her children about her, was on her knees by the mountain stream, washing linen, and splashing her little ones in sport. All these native sights and sounds, so unlike Paris, exhilarated Placide in the highest degree. He was willing to brave either heats or hurricanes on the mountains for the sake of thus feeling himself once more in his tropical home.

"One would think it a time of peace," said he, "with the wood-cutters and cultivators all about us. Where will be the first cropping from those indigo-fields? And, if that is saved, where will be the second?"

"Of that last question, ask me again when we are alone," replied his father. "As for the rest, it is by no will of mine that our people are to be called off from their wood-cutting and their tillage. To the last moment, you see, I encourage the pursuits of peace. But if you could see closely these men in the forest and the fields, you would find that, as formerly, they have the cutlass at their belt, and the rifle slung across their shoulders. They are my most trusty soldiery."

"Because they love you best, and owe most to you. What has Vincent discovered below there—far off? Have you your glass, father?"

"The deputation, perhaps," said Toussaint.

"Yes: there they are! They have crossed the Trois Rivières, and they are creeping up toward Plaisance. What a mere handful the party looks at this distance! What mere insects to be about to pull the thunder down upon so many heads! What an atom of space they cover! Yet Vincent's heart is on that little spot, I believe. Is it not so, father?"

"Yes: unless some of it is, as I fear, with the fleet beyond the ridge."

"He will be missing some day soon, then."

"For his own sake and Aimée's, I trust not. This step of hers has disconcerted me: but no harm can be done by detaining Vincent in honor or near me till the turn of events may decide his inclinations in favor of Aimée's father and of his own race. Detained he must be, for the present, in dishonor if not in honor; for he knows too much of my affairs to be allowed to see Leclerc. If Aimée returns to us, or if we gain a battle, Vincent will be ours without compulsion. Meantime, I keep him always employed beside me."

"This is the place for our post, surely," said Placide. "See how the rocks are rising on either hand above this level! No one could pass here whom we chose to obstruct."

"Yes, this is the spot—these are the Plateaux," replied his father, awaiting the officers and soldiers; the latter being prepared with tools to mark out and begin their work.

While the consultations and measurements were going on, Placide's eye was caught by the motion of a young fawn in the high grass of a lawn slope on one side of the valley. He snatched the loaded rifle which one of the soldiers had exchanged for a spade, and fired. The passion for sport was instantly roused by the act. Kids were seen here and there on the rocks. Marks were not wanting; and first Vincent, and then one and another, followed Placide's example; and there were several shots at the same instant, whose echoes reverberated to the delighted ear of Placide, who was sorry when the last had died away among the mountain peaks.

"Your first and last sport for to-day," observed Toussaint. "You have given the game a sufficient alarm for the present."

"We must find our game, as we have shot it," exclaimed Vincent. "My kid is not far off."

"After it, then! You will find me under the large cotton-tree yonder. The heat is too great here, Placide, between these walls of rock."

Every man of the party was off in pursuit of his game, except Placide, who remained to ask his father, now they were alone, what was to happen at the season of the second indigo-cutting. They threw themselves down beneath the cotton-tree, which, with its own broad shade deepened by the masses of creepers which twined

and clustered about it, and weighed it down on every side, afforded as complete a shelter from the shower of sun-rays as any artificial roof could have done.

"The second indigo-cutting is in August, you know," said Toussaint. "August will decide our freedom, if it is not decided before. August is the season when Nature comes in as our ally—comes in with her army of horrors, which we should not have the heart to invoke, but which will arrive with or without our will, and which it will be the fault of the French themselves if they brave."

"Foul airs and pestilence, you mean?" said Placide.

"I mean foul airs and pestilence. All our plans, my son (it is a comfort to make a counselor of my own son!)—all the plans of my generals and myself are directed to provide for our defense till August, certain that then the French will be occupied in grappling with a deadlier foe than even men fighting for their liberties."

"Till August!" repeated Placide. "Nearly six months! I scarcely think the French could hold their footing so long, if—but that—"

"If what? Except for what?"

"If it were not for the tremendous re-enforcements which I fear will be sent."

"I thought so," said his father.

"All France is eager to come," continued Placide. "The thousands who are here (about twelve thousand, I fancy; but they did what they could to prevent our knowing the number exactly)—the thousands who are here are looked upon with envy by those who are left behind. The jealousy was incredible—the clamor to gain appointments to the St. Domingo expedition."

"To be appointed to pestilence in the hospitals and a grave in the sands!" exclaimed Toussaint. "It is strange! Frenchmen enough have died here in seasons of trouble to convince all France that only in time of peace, leisure, stillness, and choice of residence, have Europeans a fair chance for life here for a single year. It is strange that they do not foresee their own death-angels clustering on our shores."

"The delusion is so strong," said Placide, "that I verily believe that if these twelve thousand were all dead to-day, twenty thousand more would be ready to come to-morrow. If every officer was buried here, the choicest commanders there would press forward over their graves. If ever the Lecleres should perish, I believe that other relatives of the First Consul, and perhaps some other of his sisters, would kneel to him, as these have done, to implore him to appoint them to the new expedition to St. Domingo."

"The madness of numbers is never without an open cause," said Toussaint. "What is the cause here?"

"Clear and plain enough. The representations of the emigrants, coming in aid of the secret wishes of Bonaparte, have, under his encouragement, turned the heads of his family, his court, and, after them, of his people."

"The emigrants sigh for their country (and it is a country to sigh after), and they look back on their estates and their power, I suppose; while the interval of ten years dims in their memories all inconveniences from the climate and from the degradation of their order."

"They appear to forget that any form of evil but Ogé and you, father, ever entered their Paradise. They say that, but for you, they might have been all this while in Paradise. They have boasted of its wealth and its pleasures till there is not a lady in the court of France who does not long to come and dwell in palaces of perfumed woods, marbles, and gold and silver. They dream of spending the days in breezy shades, and of sipping the nectar of tropical fruits from hour to hour. They think a good deal, too, of the plate, and wines, and equipages, and trains of attendants, of which they have heard so much; and, at the same time, of martial glory and laurel crowns."

"So these are the ideas with which they have come to languish on Tortuga, and be buried in its sands! These emigrants have much to answer for."

"So Issac and I perpetually told them; but they would not listen to any thing said by an Overture. Nor could we wonder at this, when persons of every color were given to the same boastings; so that Isaac and I found ourselves tempted into a like strain upon ourselves."

"It appears as if the old days had returned," said Toussaint; "the days of Columbus and his crews. We are as the unhappy Indians to the rapacity of Europe. No wonder if mulattoes and blacks speak of the colony as if it were the old Hayti."

"They do, from Lauville, the coffee-planter, to our Mars Plaisir. Mars Plaisir has brought orders for I do not know how many parrots; and for pearls, and perfumes, and spices, and variegated woods."

"Is it possible!" said Toussaint, smiling. "Does he really believe his own stories? If so, that accounts for his staying with you instead of going with Isaac, which I wondered at. I thought he could not have condescended to stay with us, after having lived in France."

"He condescends to be wherever he finds most scope for boasting. On Tortuga or among the ashes of Cap he can boast no more. With us he can extol France, as there he extolled St. Domingo. If August brings the destruction we look for, the poor fellow ought to die of remorse; but he has not head enough to suffer for the past. You can hold out till August, father?"

"If Maurepas joins us here with his force, I have no doubt of holding out till August. In these Mornes, as many as will not yield might resist for life; but my own forces, aided by those of Maurepas, may effectually keep off the grasp of the French from all places but those in which they are actually quartered. A few actions may be needful—morally needful—to show them that the blacks can fight. If this

lesson will not suffice, August, alas! will exterminate the foe. What do I see stirring among the ferns there? Is it more game?"

Placide started up.

"Too near us for game," he whispered; and then added aloud, "Shall we carry home another deer? Shall I fire?"

At the words, some good French was heard out of the tall, tree-like ferns—voices entreating that no one would fire; and two Frenchmen presently appeared—an army and a navy officer.

"How came you here, gentlemen? Are you residents in the colony?"

"If we had been, we should not have lost ourselves, as you perceive we have done. We are sent by the captain-general to parley, as a last hope of avoiding the collision which the captain-general deprecates. Here are our credentials, by which you will discover our names—Lieutenant Martin," pointing to his companion, "and Captain Sabès," bowing for himself.

"It is too late for negotiation, gentlemen," said L'Ouverture, "as the news from the south will already have informed the captain-general. I regret the accident of your having lost your way, as it will deprive you for a time of your liberty. You must be aware that, voluntarily or involuntarily, you have fulfilled the office of spies; and for the present, therefore, I can not part with you. Placide, summon our attendants, and, with them, escort these gentlemen to Le Zéphyr. I shall soon join you there, and hear any thing that your charge may have to say."

The officers protested, but in vain.

"It is too late, gentlemen. You may thank your own commanders for compelling me to run no more risks—for having made trust in a French officer's honor a crime to my own people. You may have heard and seen so much that I am compelled to hold you prisoners. As I have no proof, however, that you are spies, your lives are safe."

In answer to Placide's shout—the well-known mountain-ery which he was delighted to revive—their followers appeared on all sides, some bringing in their game, some empty-handed. The French officers saw that escape was impossible. Neither had they any thought, but for a passing moment, of fighting for their liberty. The Overtures were completely armed; and there never was an occasion when a man would lightly engage, hand to hand, with Toussaint or his son.

Half the collected party, including Vincent, accompanied Toussaint to Pongaudin. The other half escorted Placide and his prisoners up the morne to Le Zéphyr. These carried all the game for a present provision.

Placide observed an interchange of glances between his prisoners as they passed the spades, pickaxes, and fresh-dug earth in the Plateaux. He had little idea how that glance was connected with the romancing he had just been describing, nor how much of insult and weary suffering it boded to his father.

CHAPTER XXXI.

RETREAT.

PONGAUDIN was indeed no longer safe. Immediately on the return of Coasson to the fleet, under the date of the 17th of February, the captain-general issued a proclamation of outlawry against L'Ouverture and Christophe, pronouncing it the imperative duty of every one who had the power to seize and deliver up the traitors. As Toussaint said to his family, Pongaudin was a residence for a citizen—outlaws must go to the mountains.

To the mountain they went—not weeping and trembling, but in a temper of high courage and hope. The rocks rang with the military music which accompanied them. Their very horses seemed to feel the spirit of their cause: much more were the humblest of the soldiery animated with the hope of success in the struggle, which was now to be carried on in a mode which they much preferred to keeping watch in the plains. They found the pass well fortified; they found the morne above it still and undisturbed; untrod, as it seemed now likely to remain, by the foot of an invader. They found the mansion at Le Zéphyr, spacious as it was, much enlarged by temporary erections, and prepared for the abode of more than the number that had come. Madame Pascal looked at her husband with a sigh when the alterations met her eye; and Raymond himself did not much relish seeing sentinels posted at all his gates. Euphrosyne, however, was still quite happy. Here was her beloved Le Zéphyr, with its blooming cacao-groves. Here were space, freedom, and friends, and neither convent rules nor nuis.

A perpetual line of communication was established between the pass and this mansion. Vincent, with a troop, was appointed to guard the estate and the persons on it, including the two French prisoners. Placide was to join his father below, to receive the forces which flocked to the rendezvous. Before he went, he pointed out to Vincent and his own family a station, on a steep at some distance in the rear of the house, whence they might discern, with a good glass, the road which wound through the plain of the Artibonite, within two miles of the Plateaux, and up toward Plaisance to the north. Many and wonderful were the objects seen from this lofty station; but not one of them—not even the green knolls and hollows of the morne, stretched out from Le Zéphyr to the pass—not the brimming river of the plain—not the distant azure sea, with its tufted isles, was so interesting, under present circumstances, as this yellow winding road—the way of approach of either friend or foe.

But for the apprehensions belonging to a state of warfare—apprehensions which embitter life in all its hours to women, and possibly, more than is generally acknowledged, to men—but for the speculations as to who was destined to die, who to fall into the most cruel hands that ever abused their power over a helpless foe (for

the French of former wars were not forgotten), and what was to be the lot of those who escaped death and capture—but for these speculations, which were stirring in every woman's heart in all that household, the way of life at *Le Zéphyr* was pleasant enough.

Even poor *Génifrède* appeared to revive here. She showed more interest in nursing *Dessalines* than in any previous occupation since the death of her lover. *Thérèse* was delighted to afford her the opportunity of feeling herself useful, and permitted herself many a walk in the groves, many an hour of relaxation in the salon, which she would have despised but for their affording an interest to *Génifrède*. The three were more than ever drawn together by their new experience of the conduct of the French: Never was sick man more impatient to be strong than *Dessalines*. *Génifrède* regarded him as the pillar of the cause, on account of his uncompromising passion for vengeance; and his wife herself counted the days till he could be again abroad at the head of his forces.

When not in attendance upon him, *Génifrède* spent the hours of daylight at the station on the height. She cared neither for heat nor chill while there, and forgot food and rest; and there was sometimes that in her countenance when she returned, and in the tone of her prophesying about the destruction of the enemy, which caused the whisper to go round that she met her lover there, just under the clouds. *M. Pascal*, the rational, sagacious *M. Pascal*, was of opinion that she believed this herself.

On this station, and other heights which surrounded the mansion, there were other objects of interest than the visitations of the clouds, and the whisperings of the breezes from the depths of the woods. For many days a constant excitement was caused by the accession of troops. Not only *Toussaint's* own bands followed him to the post, but three thousand more, on whom he could rely, were spared from his other strong posts in the mountains. Soon after these three thousand, *Christophe* appeared with such force as could be spared from the garrisons in the north. The officers under *Dessalines* also, aware that the main struggle, whenever the French would come to an engagement, must be in the *Plateaux de la Ravine*, drew thither, with the remnants of the force which had suffered defeat in the southwest. Hither, too, came *Bellair*, with his family, and the little garrison which had fortified and held *L'Etoile* till it became necessary to burn and leave it.

Messenger arrived after messenger to announce these accessions of force, and the whole household poured out upon the heights to see and hear. If it was noon, the clear music of the wind instruments floated faintly in the still air: if the morning or evening breezes were abroad, the harmony came in gushes; and the shouts of greeting and reception were plainly distinguishable, and were responded to involuntarily by all at *Le Zéphyr* but the two pris-

oners. Under the impulse of the moment, no voice was louder or more joyous than *Vincent's*. It now only remained for *Maurepas* to bring his numerous troops up to the point of junction. He must presently arrive; and then, as *Placide* and other sanguine young soldiers thought, an *das Sabès* and his companion began seriously to fear, the negro force under *L'Ouverture* might defy all Europe.

News, stirring news, came from all corners of the colony with every fresh arrival. *Deesha* especially could tell all that had been done, not only at *L'Etoile* and in all the plain of *Cul-de-Sac*, but within the districts of the unfaithful generals *Clerveaux* and *La Plume*. Her boy *Juste*, though too young to take a practical part in the war, carried the passion and energy of a man into the cause, and was versed in all the details of the events which had taken place since the landing of the French. It was a sore mortification to *Juste* that he was not permitted to remain by his father's side at the *Plateaux*; but he consoled himself with teaching his little brother *Tobie* the military exercise, and with sport. *Juste* was as fond of sport as on the day when he floated under calabashes to catch wild ducks; and this was well; for at *Le Zéphyr*, under present circumstances, the sportsman was one of the most useful members of the establishment. The air of the *Mornes* was celebrated for its power of creating an appetite; and there were many mouths to feed: so that *Juste* was assured, on all hands, that he had as important a function to fulfill as if he had been a soldier. As it was believed impossible for human foot to stray beyond the morne by any other passage than that of the *Plateaux*, the boys were permitted to be out early and late, in the woods and upon the hill-sides; and often did *Génifrède* and the sentries hear the far-off shouts of the little sportsmen, or see the puff of smoke from *Juste's* rifle in the valley or under the verge of the groves. Many a nest of young orioles did *Tobie* abstract from the last fork of a branch, when the peculiar note of the parent-bird led him on into the midst of the thicket where these delicate creatures hide themselves. The ring-tail dove, one of the most exquisite of table luxuries, he was very successful in liming; and he would bring home a dozen in a morning. He could catch turkeys with a noose, and young pigs to barbecue. He filled baskets with plovers' eggs from the high lands, and of the wild fowl he brought in there was no end. In the midst of these feats, he engaged for far greater things in a little while—when the soldier-crabs should make their annual march down the mountains on their way to the sea. In those days *Tobie* promised the tables at *Le Zéphyr* should groan under the profusion of savory soups, which should banish for the season the salt beef and salt fish which, meantime, formed part of the daily diet of the household.

While his little brother was thus busy with smaller game, *Juste* was indulging a higher

ambition. When nothing better was to be had, he could condescend to plovers and pigeons; but he liked better to bring down a dainty young heifer among the herds of wild cattle, or several head of deer in a day. It was his triumph to return heavily laden, and to go forth again with three or four soldiers, or half a dozen servants (whichever could best be spared), to gather up from the hill-sides the fallen game, which he had covered with branches of trees to keep off hawk and vulture. It was his triumph to point out to his aids spot after spot where the bird of prey hovered, seeking in vain for a space on which to pounce. Amidst these triumphs, Juste was almost satisfied not to be at the Plateaux.

Perhaps the heaviest heart among all that household, scarcely excepting Génifrède's, was Madame L'Ouverture's; and yet her chief companionship, strangely enough, was with the one who carried the lightest—Euphrosyne. It was not exactly settled whether Madame L'Ouverture or Madame Pascal was hostess, and they therefore divided the onerous duties of the office; and Euphrosyne was their handmaid, charmed to be with those she loved best—charmed to be busy in new ways—charmed to hear, from time to time, that she was useful. She useful to the Ouvertures! It was an honor—it was an exquisite pleasure. She was, perhaps, the first white lady in the island, out of the convent, who had gathered fruits, prepared vegetables, and made sweet dishes with her own hands. Morning after morning the three ladies spent together in domestic occupation, finding that the servants, numerous as they were, could not get through the whole work of hospitality to such a household. Morning after morning they spent in the shaded store-room, amidst the fragrance of fruits and spices. Here the unhappy mother, the anxious wife, opened her heart to the young people; and they consoled and ministered to her as daughters.

"If you are not my daughters," said she on one of these mornings, "I have none."

"But you will have: they will return to you," said Afra. "Think of them as you did of your sons when they were at Paris—as absent for awhile to gain experience, and sure to return. You will find one of them, perhaps both, as happy on your bosom hereafter as we see your Placide by his father's side."

"How can you say so, Afra? Which of my girls will ever come to me again, as they did at Breda?"

"Génifrède is better," said Euphrosyne; "better since we came here—better every day; and I should wonder if she were not. No one can long be sullen here."

"Do not be hard, Euphrosyne, my love. 'Sullen' is a hard word for my poor, unhappy child."

"Nay, madame, no one can be more sorry for her than I am, as you will find if you ask Father Gabriel. He will tell you how angry I

was with L'Ouverture—how cruel I thought him on that dreadful day. But now, in these stirring times, when our whole world, our little world in the middle of the sea, is to be destroyed, or made free and glorious forever, I do think it is being sullen to mope on the mountain as she does, and speak to nobody, care for nobody but the Dessalines. However, I would not say a word about it if I were not sure that she is getting better. And if she were growing worse instead of better, there is nothing that I would not do to help or console her, though I must still think her sullen—not only toward her father here, but—"

And Euphrosyne crossed herself.

"It is hard," sighed Madame L'Ouverture; "it is hard to do all one ought, even in the serious hours of one's prayers. I do try, with my husband's help when he is here, and from the thought of him when he is absent, to pray, as he desires, for our enemies. But it generally ends (God forgive me!) in my praying that Bonaparte may be held back from the work of estranging our children from us."

"It can only be for a time," said Afra, again. She could think of no other consolation.

"Those who know best say that every thing is for good," continued Margot. "If so, I wonder whether any one can foretell what can be the good of a stranger—a man that we have never seen, and who has every thing about him to make him great—thrusting himself between us and our children, to take their hearts from us. I asked L'Ouverture to foretell to me how this would be explained; and he put his hand upon my mouth, and asked me to kneel down, and pray with him that we might have patience to wait God's own time."

"And could you do so?" asked Euphrosyne, with brimming eyes.

"I did: but I added a prayer that Bonaparte might be moved to leave us the glory and dominion which we value—the duty and the hearts of our children—and that he might be contented with gaining the homage of the French nation, and grasping the kingdoms of Europe."

"I think God will hear that prayer," said Afra, cheerfully.

"And I am sure Bonaparte will thank you for it," said Euphrosyne, "in that day when hearts will be known, and things seen as they are."

"One might expect," sighed Madame L'Ouverture, "as one's children grow up, that they should go mad for love; but I never thought of such a thing as their going mad for loyalty."

"Do you think it is for loyalty?" asked Euphrosyne. "I should call Placide the most loyal of your children; and, next to him, Denis."

"They think they are loyal and patriotic, my dear. I am sure I hope they will go on to think so; for it is the best excuse for them."

"I wish I had a magic glass," said Euphrosyne.

"My dear, do not wish any such thing. It

is very dangerous and wicked to have any thing to do with that kind of people. I could tell you such a story of poor Moyses (and of many other unhappy persons too) as would show you the mischief of meddling with charms, Euphrosyne."

"Do not be afraid, dear madame; I was not thinking of any witchcraft, but only wishing your children the bright mirror of a clear and settled mind. I think such a mirror would show them that what they take for loyalty and patriotism in their own feelings and conduct, is no more loyalty and patriotism than the dancing lights in our rice-grounds are stars."

"What is it, my dear, do you think?"

"I think it is weakness remaining from their former condition. When people are reared in humiliation, there will be weakness left behind. Loyal minds must call Bonaparte's conduct to L'Ouverture vulgar. Those who admire it, it seems to me, either have been, or are ready to be, slaves."

"One may pity rather than blame the first," said Afra, "but I do not pretend to have any patience with the last. I pity our poor faithless generals here, and dear Aimée, with her mind so perplexed and her struggling heart; but I have no toleration for Leclerc and Rochambeau, and the whole train of Bonaparte's worshippers in France."

"They are not like your husband, indeed, Afra."

"And they might all have been as right as he. They might all have known, as well as he, what L'Ouverture is, and what he has done. Why do they not know that he might long ago have been a king? Why do they not tell one another that his throne might at this day have been visited by ambassadors from all the nations but for his loyalty to France? Why do they not see, as my husband does, that it is for want of personal ambition that L'Ouverture is now an outlaw in the mornes, instead of being hand in hand, as a brother-king, with George of England? They might have known whom to honor and whom to restrain, as my husband does, if they had had his clearness of soul and his love of freedom."

"And because they have not," said Euphrosyne, "they are lost in amazement at his devotion to a negro outlaw. Do not shrink, dear madame, from those words. If they were meant in any thing but honor, they would not be spoken before you. Afra and I feel that to be the First of the Blacks is now to be the greatest man in the world; and that to be an outlaw in the mornes, in the cause of a redeemed race, is a higher glory than to be the conqueror of Europe. Do we not, Afra?"

"Assuredly we do."

"They will soon learn whom they have to deal with in this outlaw," said madame. "I can tell you, my dears, that Rochambeau is drawing near us, and there is likely soon to be a battle. Heigh-ho!"

"Is that bad news or good?" asked Euphrosyne.

"My husband means it for good news, my dear—at least, if Maurepas arrives from the south as soon as Rochambeau from the north."

"I wish Maurepas would come!" sighed Afra.

Madame L'Ouverture went on:

"It has been a great mortification to my husband that there has been no fair battle yet. His people—those who are faithful—have had no opportunity of showing how they feel and what they can do. The French have been busy spying, and bribing, and cajoling, and pretending to negotiate; and the one thing they will not do is fighting. But I tell you, my dears, the battle-day is coming on now. Heigh-ho!"

There was a pause; after which Euphrosyne said,

"I suppose we shall hear the battle."

There was another pause, during which madame's tears were dropping into her lap. Afra wondered how General Dessalines would bear to hear the firing from his chamber, so near, and he unable to help.

"That puts me in mind—" said madame, rising hurriedly; "how could I forget? It was the very reason why my husband told me that Rochambeau was so near. We must prepare for the wounded, my dears. They will be sent up here—as many as the house will hold, and the tents which my husband is sending up. We must be making lint, my dears, and preparing bandages. My husband has provided simples, and Madame Dessalines will tell us—Oh dear! what was I about, to forget all this!"

"Do not hurry yourself, dear madame," said Afra. "We will take care every thing is done. With Madame Dessalines to direct us, we shall be quite prepared. Do not hurry yourself so. I dare say Rochambeau is not at hand at this moment."

At the very next moment, however, Euphrosyne's countenance showed that she was by no means certain of this. Madame L'Ouverture stood still to listen, in her agitated walk about the room. There were distant shouts heard, and a bustle and buzz of voices within and about the house, which made Euphrosyne empty her lap of the shaddocks she was peeling, and run out for news.

"Joy! Joy!" she cried, returning. "Maurepas is coming. We can see his march from the station. His army has crossed the river. Make haste, Afra! Dear madame, will you go with me to the station?"

"No, my love," said madame, sitting down, trembling.

"We can go as slowly as you like. There is plenty of time. You need not hurry; and it will be a glorious sight."

"No, my dear. Do you young people go. But, Euphrosyne, are you quite sure it is not Rochambeau?"

"Oh dear, yes; quite certain. They come from the south, and have crossed the Artibonite; they come from the very point they ought

to come from. It is good news, you may rely upon it—the best possible news.”

“I am thankful,” said madame, in a low, sad voice. “Go, my dears. Go and see what you can.”

All who could leave the house or the post of duty—that is, all but the two prisoners, the sentries, and madame—were at the station or on their way to it. The first notice had been given, it appeared, by some huntsmen who had brought in game.

“My boys!” said Madame Bellair; “what a pity they should miss this sight! only that, I suppose, we could not keep Juste within bounds. He would be off to the camp before we could stop him. It may be a fortunate chance that he is on the northern hills instead of the southern to-day; but I am sorry for my little Tobie. Whereabout are they, I wonder? Has any one seen them within these two hours?”

The hunters had parted with the boys in the valley at sunrise, when they said they should seek fish and fowl to-day in the logwood grove and the pond above it, as there were hunters enough out upon the hills.

“If they are really no farther off than that,” said their mother, “they may hear us, and come for their share of the sight. You walk well, General Dessalines.”

Dessalines declared himself well. The rumor of war was the tonic he needed. Even at this distance, it had done more for him than all Thérèse’s medicines in a month. Thérèse saw that it was indeed so, and that he would be at the Plateaux now before the enemy.

“Look at General Vincent!” whispered Madame Pascal to her husband, on whose arm she was leaning, as all stood on the height, anxiously gazing at the road, which wound like a yellow thread across the plain and round the base of the hills. The troops were now hidden by a hanging wood; so that Afra rested her strained eyes for a moment, and happened to notice Vincent’s countenance. “Look, do look at General Vincent!”

Her husband shook his head, and said that was what he was then thinking of. Dessalines and his wife were similarly occupied; and they and the Pascals communicated with each other by glances.

“What is the matter, Vincent?” asked Dessalines, outright. “Here are the long-expected come at last; and you look as gloomily upon them as if they were all France.”

“I am not such a man of blood as you, Dessalines. I have never given up the hope of accommodation and peace. It is strange, when the great men on both sides profess such a desire for peace, that we must see this breach made, nobody can tell why.”

“Why, my good fellow!” exclaimed Dessalines, staring into his face, “surely you are talking in your sleep! The heats put you to sleep last summer, and you are not awake yet. You know nothing that has been done since December, I do believe. Come! let me tell you, as little Tobie is not here to do it.”

“Don’t, love,” said Thérèse, pressing her husband’s arm. “No disputes to-day, Jacques! The times are too serious.”

“At another time, general,” said Vincent, “I will instruct you a little in my opinions, formed when my eyes were wide open in France, which yours have never been.”

“There they are! There they come from behind the wood, if we could but see them for the dust!” exclaimed some.

“Oh this dust! we can see nothing!” cried others. “Who can give a guess how many they are?”

“It is impossible,” said Bellair. “Without previous knowledge, one could not tell them from droves of bullocks and goats going to market at St. Marc.”

“Except for their caps,” said Euphrosyne. “I see a dozen or two of feathers through the cloud. Do not you, Afra?”

“Yes; but where is their music? We should hear something of it here, surely.”

“Yes, it is a dumb march,” said Dessalines, “at present. They will strike up when they have turned the shoulder of that hill, no doubt. There! now listen!”

All listened, so that the brook, half a mile behind, made its babbling heard; but there was not a breath of music.

“Is it possible that Rochambeau should be in the way?” asked Thérèse.

“He can not be in the way,” said her husband; “for, where I stand, I command every foot of the road up to our posts; but he may be nearer than we thought. I conclude that he is.”

“Look! See!” cried several. “They are taking another road! Where are they going? General Dessalines, what does it mean?”

“I would thank any one to tell me that it is not as I fear,” replied Dessalines. “I fear Maurepas is effecting a junction, not with us, but with some one else.”

“With Rochambeau!” “Traitor!” “The traitor Maurepas!” “His head!” “Our all for his head!” cried the enraged gazers, as they saw Maurepas indeed diverging from the road to the post, and a large body of French troops turning a reach of the same road from behind a hill. The two clouds of dust met. And now there was no more silence, but sound enough from below and afar. There was evidently clamor and rage among the troops in the Plateaux; and bursts of music from the army of their foes, triumphant and insulting, swelled the breeze.

“Our all for the head of Maurepas!” cried the group again.

“Nay,” said Vincent; “leave Maurepas his head. Who knows but that peace may come out of it? If all had done as he has now done, there could be no war.”

“In the same way,” exclaimed Pascal, “as if all of your color thought as you do. There would then be no war, because there would be no men to fight; but only slaves to walk quietly under the yoke.”

"Be as angry as you will," said Vincent, in a low voice, to Pascal. "No one's anger can alter the truth. It is impious and vain, here as elsewhere, to oppose Bonaparte. L'Ouverture will have to yield; you know that as well as I do, M. Pascal; and those are the best friends of the blacks who help to render war impossible, and who bring the affair to a close while the First Consul may yet be pleacable."

"Has that opinion of yours been offered to your commander, Vincent?"

"It would have been if he had asked for it. He probably knows that I had rather have seen him high in honor and function under Leclere, than an outlaw entrenched in the mornes."

"Then why are you here?"

"I am here to protect those who can not protect themselves in these rough times. I am here to guard these ladies against all foes, come they whence they may—from France, or out of our own savannas—from earth, air, or sea. But hark! Silence, ladies! Silence all, for a moment!"

They listened, ready to take alarm from him, they knew not why. Nothing was heard but the distant baying of hounds—the hunters coming home, as it was supposed.

"Those are not St. Domingo hounds," said Vincent, in a low voice, to Dessalines.

"No, indeed! Home, all of you! Run for your lives! No questions, but run! Thérèse, leave me! I command you. If this is your doing, Vincent—"

"Upon my soul it is not. I know nothing about it. Home, ladies, as fast as possible!"

"My children!" exclaimed Madame Bellair.

"I can find them: if you will only tell me the danger—what is the danger?"

"You hear those hounds? They are Cuba blood-hounds," said Dessalines. "The fear is that they are leading an enemy over the hills."

Not a word more was necessary. Every one fled who could except Thérèse, who would not go faster than her husband's strength permitted him to proceed. The voice of the hounds and the tramp of horses' feet were apparently so near before they could reach the first sentry, that both were glad to see Pascal hurrying toward them with two soldiers, who carried Dessalines to the house, while Pascal and Thérèse ran for their lives—she striving to thank her companion for remembering to bring this aid.

"No thanks!" said Pascal. "General Dessalines is our great man now. We can not do without him. Here is to be a siege—a French troop has come over by some unsuspected pass—I do not understand it."

"Have you sent to the Plateaux?"

"Of course, instantly; but our messengers will probably be intercepted, though we have spared three men, to try three different paths. If L'Ouverture learns our condition, it will be by the firing."

Some of the sportsmen had brought in from the hills the news of the presence of an enemy in the morne—not, apparently, on their way to the

plantation, but engaged in some search among the hills. Others spoke tidings which would not have been told for hours but for the determination of Madame Bellair to set out in search of her children, whatever foe might be in the path. It became necessary to relate that it was too late to save her children. They had been seen lying in a track of the wood, torn in pieces by the blood-hounds, whose cry was heard now close at hand. Though there was no one who would at first undertake to tell the mother this, there were none who, in the end, could conceal it from her. They need not have feared that their work of defense would be impeded by her wailings and tears. There was not a cry, there was not a tear. Those who dared to look in her face saw that the fires of vengeance were consuming all that was womanish in Deesha's nature. She was the soldier to whom, under Dessalines, the successful defense of Le Zéphyr was mainly owing. Dessalines gave the orders and superintended the arrangements, which she, with a frantic courage, executed. From that hour to the day when she and her husband expired in tortures, the forces of the First Consul had no more vindictive and mischievous enemy than the wife of Charles Bellair. Never propitiated and long unsubdued, Charles Bellair and his wife lived henceforth in the fastnesses of the interior, and never for a day desisted from harassing the foe, and laying low every Frenchman on whom a sleepless and apparently ubiquitous vengeance could fix its grasp.

Deesha was not the only woman who seemed to bear a foeman's soul. Thérèse looked as few had seen her look before; and, busy as was her husband with his arrangements for the defense of the house, he could not but smile in the face which expressed so much. To her, and any companions she could find among the women, was confided the charge of Sabès and Martin, who, locked into a room whence they must hear the firing of their comrades outside, could not but be supposed likely to make a desperate attempt to escape. Thérèse answered for their detention if she had arms for herself and two companions. Whoever these heroines might be, the prisoners were found safe after the French had decamped.

There were doubts which, at any other time, would have needed deliberation. It was a doubt, for a moment, whether to imprison Vincent, whose good faith was now extremely questionable: but there was no one to guard him; and his surprise and concern were evidently so real, and his activity was so great in preparing for defense, that there seemed nothing for it but trusting him to protect the women who were under his charge. Dessalines, however, kept his eye upon him, and his piece in readiness to shoot him down on the first evidence of treachery.

Another doubt was as to the foe they had to contend against. How they got into the morne, and why such an approach was made

to an object so important as securing a party of hostages like these; whether, if Vincent had nothing to do with it, the spies had; and whether, therefore, more attacks might not be looked for, were questions which passed through many minds, but to which no consideration could now be given. Here were the foe, and they must be kept off.

The struggle was short and sharp. Small as was the force without, it far outnumbered that of the fighting men in what had been supposed the secure retreat of *Le Zéphyr*; and there is no saying but that the ladies might have found themselves at length on Tortuga, and in the presence of Bonaparte's sister, if the firing had not reached the watchful ear of *L'Ouverture* at the Plateaux, on the way to which all the three messengers had been captured. Toussaint arrived with a troop in time to deliver his household. After his first onset the enemy retreated; at first carrying away some prisoners, but dropping them on their road, one after another, as they were more and more hardly pressed by *L'Ouverture*, till the few survivors were glad to escape as they could, by the way they came.

Toussaint returned, his soldiers bringing in the mangled bodies of the two boys. When he inquired what loss had been sustained, he found that three, besides the children, were killed; and that Vincent was the only prisoner, besides the three messengers turned back in the morne.

"Never was there a more willing prisoner, in my opinion," observed Pascal.

"He carries away a mark from us, thank Heaven!" said Dessalines. "Madame Belair shot him."

It was so. Deesha saw Vincent join the French and go off with them on the arrival of *L'Ouverture*; and partly through revenge, but not without a thought of the disclosures it was in his power to make, she strove to silence him forever. She only reached a limb, however, and sent him away, as Dessalines said, bearing a mark from *Le Zéphyr*.

One of the French troop, made prisoner, was as communicative as could have been desired; as much so as Vincent would probably be on the other side. He declared that the attack on *Le Zéphyr* was a mere accident; that his company had entered the morne, led by the blood-hounds in pursuit of some negroes from whom they wanted certain information for Rochambeau respecting the localities; that they had thus become acquainted with the almost impracticable pass by which they had entered; that, when the hounds had destroyed the children, and proved that there were inhabitants in the morne, the situation of *Le Zéphyr* had been discovered, and afterward the rank of its inhabitants; that the temptation of carrying off these hostages to Rochambeau had been too strong to be resisted; and hence the attack.

"We shall have to remove," the ladies said to each other, "now that our retreat is known."

"Shall we have to remove?" asked Euphrosyne, whose love of the place could not be quenched even by the blood upon its threshold. "I am not afraid to stay if any one else will."

"How can you be so rash, Euphrosyne?" asked Afra.

"I would not be rash," Euphrosyne replied; "but we know now how these people came into the morne, and *L'Ouverture* will guide the pass. And remember, Afra, we have beaten them; and they will take care how they attack us another time. Remember we have beaten them."

"We have beaten them," said Dessalines, laughing. "And what did you do to beat off the French, my little lady?"

"I watched the prisoners through the key-hole; and if they had made the least attempt to set the house on fire—"

"You would have put it out with your tears—hey, Mademoiselle Euphrosyne?"

"Ask madame, your lady, what she would have done in such a case: she stood beside me. But does *L'Ouverture* say we must remove?"

"*L'Ouverture* thinks," said Toussaint, who heard her question, "that this is still the safest place for the brave women who keep up his heart by their cheerful faces. He is ashamed that they have been negligently guarded. It shall not happen again."

He was just departing for the Plateaux. As he went out he said to his wife, while he cast a look of tender compassion upon Madame Belair,

"I shall tell Charles that you will cherish Deesha. It is well that we can let her remain here, beside the graves of her children. Bury them with honor, Margot."

CHAPTER XXXII.

AUGUST FAR OFF.

In time of peace, and if her children had perished by any other mode, it might have been a consolation to Deesha to dwell for a time beside their graves. As it was, the deep bark of the murderous dogs filled her ear perpetually, and their fangs seemed to tear her heart. Her misery in the quiet mansion of the mornes was unendurable; and the very day after the funeral she departed, with her husband, to a place where no woman's eye could mark her maternal anguish—where no semblance of a home kept alive the sense of desolation. She retired, with her husband and his troop, to a fastness higher up in the *Morne du Chaos*, whence they kept watch over the regular intrenchments below, cut off supplies of provisions from the French, harassed all their marches, and waged a special war against the blood-hounds, the negro's most dreaded foe. More, however, were perpetually brought over from Cuba, and reg-

ularly trained, by means too barbarous for detail, to make negroes their prey. From the hour when Deesha first heard the cry of a blood-hound, more than the barbarism of her native Congo took possession of her. Never more was she seen sewing under the shade of the tamarind-tree. Never more did she spread the table for husband or guests within a house. Never more was her voice heard singing, gayly or plaintively, the songs that she had gathered from the palm-groves of Africa, or the vineyards of France, or from the flowery fields of a mother's hopes. Henceforth she carried the rifle, and ate her meal in stern silence, in the cave of the rock. When she laughed, it was as her shot went straight to her victim's heart. When she spoke, it was of the manœuvres of her mountain war; and the only time that she was ever seen to shed tears was when a rumor of a truce reached the pinnacle on which she dwelt. Though assured that any truce could be only, as every negro knew, a truce till August, the mere semblance of accommodation with the foe forced tears of vexation from eyes which were forever after dry.

If she felt a gleam of satisfaction before leaving *Le Zéphyr*, it was at the singular accident by which *Juste*, always so bent upon being a soldier, shared the honors of a military funeral. *Juste* and *Tobie* were buried with the soldiers who had fallen in the defense of the house; and to the father who followed the coffins, and the mother who hid herself in the thicket, there was something like pleasure in the roll of the drum, and the measure of the dead-march, and the warlike tone of the shrill dirge which was sung round the open graves, and the discharge of fire-arms over them—a satisfaction like that of fulfilling the last wish of their boy. This done, and the graves fenced and planted, the childless pair departed, wishing, perhaps, in their own hearts, that they could weep their misfortune like those whom they left behind.

For some time forward from that day there was no more cause for weeping at *Le Zéphyr*. The season had come for the blacks to show what they could do. In the hope, as he said, of hastening on the peace, *Vincent* told all that he knew of the plans and resources of the outlawed chiefs; and, in consequence, the French at length proceeded to vigorous action, believing that if they could force the posts at the Plateaux, they could so impoverish and disable the negro leaders as to compel them to become mere banditti, who might be kept in check by guarding the mountain passes. The French force was therefore brought up again and again to the attack, and always in vain. The ill success of the invaders was, no doubt, partly owing to the distress which overtook their soldiery whenever they had been a few days absent from their camp and their ships. Whichever way they turned, and however sudden the changes of their march, they found the country laid waste—the houses unroofed, the cattle driven away, the fields burned or inundated, and noth-

ing but a desert under their feet and flames on the horizon, while the sun of the tropic grew daily hotter overhead. These were disadvantages; but the French had greatly the superiority in numbers, in experience, and in supplies of ammunition. Yet for many weeks they failed in all their attempts. They left their dead before the entrance of the Plateaux, or heaped up in the neighboring fields, or strewed along the mountain paths, now to the number of seven hundred, now twelve, and now fifteen hundred; while the negroes numbered their losses by tens or scores. The first combined attack, when *Maurepas*, with his army, joined *Rochambeau*, and two other divisions met them from different points, was decisively disastrous; and even *Vincent* began to doubt whether the day of peace, the day of chastisement of *L'Ouverture's* romance, was so near as he had supposed.

The last time that the French dared the blacks to come forth from their intrenchments and fight on the plain, afforded the most triumphant result to the negroes. So tremendous was the havoc among the French, while the blacks charged without intermission, rolling on their force from their intrenchments, each advancing line throwing itself upon the ground immediately after the charge, while those behind passed over their bodies, enabling them to rise and retreat, in order to rush forward again in their turn, that the troops of the Rhine and the Alps were seized with a panic, and spread a rumor that there was sorcery among the blacks, by which they were made invulnerable. It was scarcely possible, too, to believe in the inferiority of their numbers, so interminable seemed the succession of foes that presented a fresh front. *Rochambeau* saw that, if not ordered to retreat, his troops would fly; and whether it was a retreat or a flight at last, nobody could afterward determine. They left fifteen hundred dead on the field, and made no pause till they reached *Plaisance*.

From this time the French generals resolved against more fighting till reinforcements arrived from France. New hopes inspired the blacks; all of them, at least, who did not, like *L'Ouverture* and *Christophe*, anticipate another inundation of the foe from the sea. *Placide*, who was foremost in every fight, was confident that the struggle was nearly over, and rode up to *Le Zéphyr* occasionally with tidings which spread hope and joy among the household, and not only made his mother proud, but lightened her heart.

He told at length that the French, not relishing the offensive war begun by *Christophe*, had blockaded his father in the Plateaux. He treated this blockade as a mere farce; as a mode of warfare which would damage the French irreparably as the heats came on, while it could not injure the blacks, acquainted as they were with the passes of the country.

Placide would have been right if only one single circumstance had been otherwise than it was. *L'Ouverture* had nothing to fear from a

blockade in regard to provisions. He had adherents above, among the heights, who could supply his forces with food for themselves and fodder for their horses inexhaustibly. Every ravine in their rear yielded water. They had arms enough; and in their climate, and with the summer coming on, the clothing of the troops was a matter of small concern. But their ammunition was running short. Every thing was endeavored, and timely, to remedy this; but there was no effectual remedy. Many a perilous march over the heights, and descent upon the shore, did one and another troop attempt—many a seizure of French supplies did they actually effect—many a trip did Paul, and others who had boats, make to one and another place, where it was hoped that powder and ball might be obtained; but no sufficient supply could be got. The foe were not slow in discovering this, and in deriving courage from their discovery. From the moment that they found themselves assailed with flights of arrows from the heights, and that their men were wounded, not always with ball or even shot, but with buttons, nails, and other bits of old metal—with any thing rather than lead, they kept a closer watch along the coast and the roads, that no little boat, no cart or pack-horse might escape capture. Toward the end of April the difficulty became so pressing, that L'Ouverture found himself compelled to give up his plan of defensive war, with all its advantages, and risk much to obtain the indispensable means of carrying on the struggle.

It was with this view that he mustered his force, gave out nearly the last remains of his ammunition, burst victoriously through the blockading troops, routed them, and advanced to attack the French lines posted at Plaisance. Behind him he left few but his wounded, commanded by Dessalines, who was yet hardly sufficiently recovered to undertake a more arduous service. Before him were the troops under Manrepas, whom he had always believed he could recall with a word if he could but meet them face to face. Others probably believed so too; for these troops had on every occasion been kept back, and so surrounded as that no one from their old haunts and their old companions could reach them. Now, however, the French force was so reduced by the many defeats they had undergone, that it was probable they would be obliged to put faith in the renegade division if attacked; and L'Ouverture was not without hopes of striking a decisive blow by recalling the negroes in the French lines to their allegiance to himself.

Every thing answered to his anticipations. When he advanced to the attack, he found the troops of Manrepas posted in the front, to weaken the resolution of their former comrades or receive their first fire. His heart bounded at the sight; and all his resentment against them as renegades melted into compassion for the weakness of those who had been reared in terror and servility. He rushed forward, placing

himself, without a thought of fear, between the two armies, and extended his arms toward the black lines of the enemy, shouting to them,

“My soldiers, will you kill your general? Will you kill your fathers, your comrades, your brothers?”

In an instant every black was on his knees. It was a critical moment for the French. They rushed on, drowning the single voice on which their destruction seemed to hang, threw the kneeling soldiers on their faces, strode over their prostrate bodies, and nearly effected their object of closing round L'Ouverture and capturing him. His danger was imminent. The struggle was desperate, but his soldiers saved him. The battle was fierce and long, but again and again turning in his favor till all seemed secure. He was forcing the enemy from their lines, and giving out the inspiring negro cry of victory, when a new force marched up against him, stopped the retreat of the French, and finally repulsed the blacks—exhausted as they were, and unable to cope with a fresh foe. In the most critical moment, four thousand troops, fresh from the ships, had arrived to convert the defeat of the French into a victory; and they brought into the battle more than their own strength in the news that re-enforcements from France were pouring in upon every point of the coast.

The news reached L'Ouverture, and completed the discouragement of his little army. It decided him at once in what direction to retreat. It was useless to return to the Plateaux, as the force there was more than proportioned to the supply of ammunition. This fresh descent of the French upon the coast would have the effect of dispersing the small bodies of black troops in the north. A rendezvous was necessary, in order to make the most both of the men and stores. He proceeded to post his troops at Le Dondon and Marmalade, sending orders to Christophe to meet him there. There they might possibly be usefully employed in cutting off access to the French army at Plaisance, and, at the same time, supplying their own wants, while deliberating on what plan to carry on the struggle, under the new circumstances, till August; for, whatever treachery and defection might have to be encountered elsewhere, there was never a moment's doubt that Nature would prove a faithful ally when her appointed season came.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

CONFLICTING.

“WHAT to do!” said L'Ouverture to Christophe, as they entered his apartment at Le Dondon. “What to do! Every thing this year and for the future may depend on what we decide on for our next step. And we must decide before we leave this room. Say your thoughts, Henri.”

"I am for a truce."

"I am for a retreat in the mountains. Now for our reasons! Why do you desire a truce?"

"Because I see that Leclerc so earnestly wishes it, that I am confident we may make good terms for the interval of waiting till we recover altogether our power, our territory, and our people. Leclerc will revoke our outlawry. That done, you will be the virtual ruler of our people till August; after which, no foes will be left upon our soil. What have you to say against this?"

"That it is yielding unnecessarily and fatally to the invaders. Where are our censures of Clerveaux and Maurepas, if we too yield to Leclerc and make terms with him?"

"Every one of our people will understand the difference in the cases. Every one of them sees the difference between falling at the feet of Leclerc, like Clerveaux, or joining him on the very field on which you were about to oppose him, like Maurepas; and making a truce, for a short interval, when you are almost destitute of ammunition, and the enemy so exhausted with the heats as to decline coming into the field; while, at the same time, fresh troops are pouring in upon the coast in such numbers as to prevent your regaining your independence by remaining in arms. If every man of the negroes has not wit enough to understand this for himself, who is better able than you to inform them of whatsoever you desire them to know? Be assured, Toussaint, powerful as your influence is this day among our people, it will be more so when you are no longer an outlaw. It is worth a large sacrifice of our feelings to have our outlawry revoked."

"Have you more reasons to give for accepting a truce—or, as the French understand it, a peace?"

"Let me first hear your reasons for a retreat in the mountains."

"A retreat in the mountains is the more honest proceeding of the two, Henri. If we make terms with the French, it will be knowing that that which goes by the name of peace is no more than a truce till August."

"And will not they know that as well as we? Is it necessary to tell the whites at this day that they are liable to the fever in the heats, and that any army, however glorious in its strength, becomes a skeleton at that season? That is a matter that is perfectly understood by all the parties."

"We must look forward, Henri, to the days to come, when August itself is past. The influence of myself or my successor will be injured by my having even apparently yielded to the invaders. My power over our people's minds will be immeasurably greater if I shall have consistently refused to tolerate the foe from the moment of their first hostile act to the end of the struggle. Am I not right?"

"That character of consistency will be purchased at a price too dear—at the cost of your characteristic of mercy, Toussaint—of rever-

ence for human life. You will be ranked with Dessalines if you keep up for four months the disturbance and devastation of war, when every one knows that your end will be as certainly gained after these four months have been spent in peace. What a grief it would be to see you changed from the adored L'Ouverture to Toussaint the Bandit! Pardon my freedom."

"I required it of you, my friend, so do not speak of pardon. We are agreed that the moral influence of my conduct is the main consideration, as the destruction of the French army is certain, sooner or later—our independence secure, if we so will it. If we remain in the mountains, cutting off in detail the grasp which France shall attempt to lay on any part of our territory or our system; training our people, meantime, for another campaign, if France should attempt another; replenishing gradually our stores with perpetual small captures from the enemy, allowing them no asylum, discouraging their presence in every possible way—we shall be taking the shortest, and, therefore, the most merciful method of convincing the French and the blacks at once that their empire here is at an end, and slavery henceforth impossible for the negroes of St. Domingo. But if I make a peace or truce, how dim and perplexed will be the impression of my conduct! I can not hold office, civil or military, under the French. Henri, you would not have me do so?"

"Certainly not. Till August, retire to your estate, that every office in the colony may thereafter be in your hand."

"If I co-operate with the French even in the faintest appearance, my moral influence will be all on their side, and a second year of warfare will find us farther from peace or independence than the first. If I act more or less for the blacks, Leclerc will send me to France as a traitor. If I do nothing, neither party will believe in my doing nothing; each will suspect me of secret dealings with the other. It is also true that I can not, if I would, be inoperative. Every glance of my eye, every word of my lips in my own piazza at Pongaudin, would be made to bear its interpretation, and go to disturb the single and distinct image which I now stand before every eye and in every mind."

"I do not agree with you," said Henri. "While the image of August is distinct in the minds of the St. Domingo people, it will keep your influence single and intelligible to them. As for what the French think, that is their own affair. They have the means of knowledge: let them use them. There is one fact which no one can misunderstand the while: that, after the defections under which you have suffered, and under your known want of military stores, an excursive war from the mountains appears ferocious—both revengeful and cruel—when every one knows that time will render it unnecessary."

"These defections do not discourage me as

they do you, Henri. Full one-third of my forces are faithful—are proved so by trial. These, with the goodness of our cause, are enough for my hopes—almost for my desires. There is no ferocity, but rather mercy, in hastening on the day of our independence and peace, by using a force so respectable, so honored as this tried remnant of my army.”

“You reckon fallaciously, Toussaint. You include my troops in the force you speak of.”

“Henri!” exclaimed L’Ouvverture, stopping in his walk up the apartment, “it can not be that you will desert me. No, no! forgive me that the words passed my lips!”

“Never will I desert you or our cause, Toussaint; never will I intermit my enmity to our invaders: never will I live for any other object than the liberties of our people. But the time may be come for us to pursue our common object by different paths. I can not go and play the bandit in the mountains.”

“Why did you not call me a bandit when I was at the Plateaux?”

“Because you were then waging an honorable war. War, not peace, was then beckoning you on to freedom. A state of voluntary outlawry, a practice of needless ravage, will make a different man of you. Say no more of it, Toussaint; I can not be lieutenant to—Do not make me utter the word.”

“You have always hitherto obeyed me, Henri.”

“I have; and when we are in a state of war, I will obey you again. Do not class me with La Plume and Clerveaux—or rather, do, if you will, and, when August is past, I will prove to you the difference.”

“Do not you see, Henri, that you not only cease to aid me at a great crisis, but that you put a force upon me?”

“I can not help it: I must do so rather than go and be a butcher in the morines with Dessalines.”

“Say with me too: call me a butcher too! After the long years that you have known my heart, call me a butcher too!”

“Let us talk sense, Toussaint: this is no time for trifling. After August I shall join you again—to fight, if it be necessary: but I hope it will not.”

“Not if Heaven strengthens me to do my work without you, Christophe. After the fever, it is much for the sick to walk: we do not expect the dead to rise.”

“When I join you after August,” resumed Christophe, “whether for the labors of war or peace, you, and perhaps even Jacques, will wish that your hands were as clean from blood as mine. Your thought, Toussaint! tell me your thought. If—”

“I was thinking that you *will* join us, Henri. You *will* labor till our great work is done. You may err, and you may injure our cause by your error; but you will never be seduced from the rectitude of own your intentions. That is what I was thinking. I would fain keep my judgment of you undisturbed by a grieving heart.”

“You are more than generous, Toussaint—you are just. I was neither. Pardon me. But I am unhappy—I am wretched that you are about to forfeit your greatness, when—Oh, Toussaint! nothing should ever grieve me again if we could but agree to-day; if I could but see you retire, with your wonted magnanimity, to Pongaudin, there, with your wonted piety, to await the leadings from above. Where is your wonted faith, that you do not see them now through the clouds that are about us?”

“I can not but see them now,” said Toussaint, sighing; “and to see is to follow. If you are wholly resolved to make a truce for yourself and your division—”

“I am wholly resolved so to do.”

“Then you compel me to do the same. Without you I have not force sufficient to maintain an effectual resistance.”

“Thank God! then we shall see you again L’Ouvverture, and no longer Toussaint the Outlaw. You will—”

“Hear me, Henri! You put this constraint upon me. What are you prepared to do if the French prove treacherous after our peace is made?”

“To drive them into the sea, to be sure. You do not suppose I shall regard them as friends the more for making a truce with them! We will keep our eyes upon them. We will preserve an understanding with the whole island as to the vigilance which the blacks must exercise, day and night, over their invaders. The first treacherous thought in Leclerc’s mind is a breach of the truce—and dearly shall he rue it.”

“This is all well planned, Henri. If the cunning of Leclerc proves deeper than yours—”

“Say ours, Toussaint.”

“No. I have no part in this arrangement. I act under your compulsion and under my own protest, as I require of you, Henri, to remember. If we are not deep enough, vigilant enough, active enough for Leclerc and his council—if he injures us before August, and Bonaparte ordains a second campaign after it, are you ready to endure the responsibility of whatever may befall?”

“I am.”

“Have you looked well forward into the future, and detected every mischief that may arise from our present temporizing, and resolved that it was a less evil than losing the rest of this season, putting a compulsion upon your best friend, and fettering the deliverer of your people?”

“I have so looked forward—repudiating the charge of undutiful compulsion. I act for myself and those under my command.”

“Virtually compelling me to act with you, by reducing me from being the general of an army to be the leader of a troop; and by exposing our cause to the peril—the greatest of all—of a declared division between you and me. I yield, Christophe; but what I am going to do, I do under protest. Order in the French prisoners.”

"Yet one moment," said Henri. "Let me reason with you a little further. Be satisfied of the goodness of the act before you do it."

"I do not need satisfaction on that. I do not quarrel with the terms we are to make. I do not protest against any of the provisions of the treaty. I protest against the necessity of treating. Summon the prisoners."

"Can you," said Christophe, still delaying, "can you improve upon the terms proposed? Can the conditions be altered so as to give more satisfaction to your superior foresight? I would not use flattering terms at this moment, Toussaint; you know I would not. But your sagacity is greater than mine, or any one's. I distrust myself about the terms of the treaty, I assure you."

"About any thing more than the mere terms of the treaty?" asked Toussaint, again stopping in his walk.

"About the conditions—and about the conditions only."

"Your self-distrust is misplaced, and comes too late. Order the prisoners to be brought in."

As Sabès and Martin entered, L'Ouverture and Christophe renewed, by a glance, their agreement to speak and act with the utmost apparent sameness of views and intentions. It was but a poor substitute for the real coincidence which had always hitherto existed, but it was all that was now possible.

"I am going to send you back to your captain-general, gentlemen," said Toussaint.

"Not without apology, I trust," said Sabès, "for having subjected to such treatment as we have undergone, messengers sent to parley, bearing actually the necessary credentials from the captain-general. For nine weeks have my companion and I been dragged from place to place, wherever it suited your purposes to go, in perpetual fear for our lives."

"I am sorry you have trembled for your lives, gentlemen," replied Toussaint. "It was an unnecessary suffering, as I gave you my word, on your capture, that your persons were safe. Considering that you were found crouching among the ferns, within hearing of my private conversation with my son respecting the affairs of the war, I think your complaints of your detention unreasonable; and I have no apology to make on that ground, either to yourselves or your commander. I can not hear another word of complaint, gentlemen. You know well that by any general in Europe you would, under similar circumstances, have been hanged as spies. Now to public business. I am about to send you to General Leclerc, with proposals from General Christophe and myself to bring this painful war to an end, according to the desire of the heads of both armies. We all know such to be the wish of the captain-general."

"No doubt. It was never his desire, nor that of any true Frenchman," said Sabès, "to be at war on the soil of this colony. You alone,

General Toussaint, are responsible for the loss of lives and all the other miseries which it has occasioned."

"How so? Let him say on, Lieutenant Martin. No one suffers by speaking his thoughts to me, be they what they may. On what consideration is it possible to impute this war to me?"

"It would never have broken out if you had not despised the authority and thrown off the control of the mother-country. This view can not be new to you, General Toussaint," continued Sabès, on seeing the look of amazement with which L'Ouverture turned to Christophe.

"Indeed it is," replied Toussaint. "The charge is as unexpected as it is untrue. You, sir," he said, appealing to Lieutenant Martin, "are a naval officer. Tell me how you would act in such a case as this: Suppose you commanded a vessel of the state, authorized and approved in your office: suppose another officer came—without notice, without your having heard a word of complaint—and leaped upon your deck with a crew double the number of your own, striking down and fettering your men. If you resisted their violence in such a case, successfully or unsuccessfully, would you admit that you were the cause of the struggle—that you despised the Government under which you held your command—that you threw off the control of your superiors?"

There was a pause.

"Such is my case," said Toussaint, "and thus you must represent it if you be men of honor. The purport of my letter to the captain-general (which will be ready by the time you are prepared for your journey) is to declare the willingness of General Christophe and myself to negotiate, as the continuation of the war, under the circumstances which have arisen, appears to be without object. The terms which we require, and which it is supposed General Leclerc will agree to, are an amnesty for all who have ever fought or otherwise acted under our command, and the preservation of the rank of all black officers, civil and military. My friend Christophe and I will retire to our estates, to pray for the peace and welfare of the colony—the peace and welfare which have, notwithstanding our prayers, been so unhappily broken up. Gentlemen, there can be little doubt that the captain-general will agree to these terms of pacification."

"We can not answer for his replies," said Martin. "Our representations shall be faithful."

"I doubt it not," said Toussaint, "after experiencing your companion's courage and fidelity in rebuke; for which, though he is mistaken in fact, I honor him. Nor can I doubt the readiness of the captain-general to treat with us on the terms I shall propose; for he must know that I shall always, among my native fastnesses, be strong to burn, ravage, and destroy. He must know that, though my negroes may be conquered, they will never more be sub-

duced; and that, intrenched in the mornes, they can always effectually prevent an unfriendly settlement on the island. He must know that I am open to generous treatment; but otherwise ready and able to sell dearly a life which has done our country some service."

The French officers assented; but waited, as if to hear something more, besides Christophe's declaration, for his own part, of agreement in what L'Ouverture had said.

Sabès at length spoke, not without another cautionary sign from his companion.

"Your generous frankness, General Toussaint," said he, "induces me to remind you of one more duty, which, in case of the desired pacification, you will owe to the captain-general. You will hold yourself indebted to France for all such treasure as, in an hour of alarm, you may have chosen to conceal."

"What does this mean?" said Toussaint. "General Christophe, do you know of any public treasure being concealed in any part of the island?"

"None," said Christophe, "public or private."

"Nor do I. You hear, gentlemen."

"You forget, General Toussaint, what we heard on the occasion of our capture."

"You forget your own words to us," said Lieutenant Martin; "that we had seen and heard too much for you to let us go."

"I remember my words perfectly; and that they referred to my choice of a post in the mornes, and a retreat for my family—affairs long since made public enough. What else do you suppose you saw and heard? If I spoke of depositing my treasures in the mornes, I was doubtless speaking of my household. Did you understand me to mean gold and silver? What was it that you suppose you saw and heard?"

"We saw new-made graves, and the tools that dug them, after having heard shots."

"You are welcome to dig upon the Plateaux, and to take whatever treasure you may find. You will find only the bones of the brave who fell in attacking and defending the post."

"And of those who, being there, can tell no tales. You forget that we heard their death-shots before we saw their graves. The time is come for you to tell the secret that you buried with them."

Christophe rarely laughed, but he laughed now.

"They believe," said he, "apparently they believe that you hid treasure in the morne, and then shot and buried the servants employed."

"We do," said the officers, gravely.

"Were you really about to carry this story to the captain-general?" asked Toussaint, smiling. "Tell him that the wealth of the colony, sufficient for the desires of its inhabitants, is dispersed through all its dwellings, to be enjoyed—not hidden by avarice, and sealed with blood."

"We are too well informed," said Sabès,

"concerning the wealth and splendor of the colony, to believe that any part of its treasure has met our eyes that can be concealed. Duty to France now requires that she should be put in possession of the whole wealth of the island."

"Let France cultivate an honorable peace," said Toussaint, "and her authorities will assuredly see the wealth of the colony spread over all its fields, and amassed in every harbor. We can then present an overflowing public treasury. That is all I have to offer—and it ought to be enough."

Sabès did not press the point further, because he saw it would be useless. But he and his companion were more and more persuaded of the truth of their notion of what they had seen and heard, the more they recalled the tales told at the court of France of the plate, the gems, the bullion and coin, and the personal ornaments which abounded even in the prosperous days of the old emigrants. Every one knew, too, that the colony had been more prosperous than ever since. It is not known by whom the amount of the hidden treasure was at length fixed at thirty-two millions of francs. Sabès and Martin simply told their story and their ideas to Leclerc, adding the information that Toussaint L'Ouverture was an adept in dissimulation; that they had as nearly as possible been deprived of this piece of insight by the apparent frankness and candor of his manners; and that, but for the boldness of Sabès in pressing the affair of the buried treasure, they should actually have quitted the negro chief, after an occasional intercourse of nine weeks, without any knowledge of that power of dissimulation which had been formerly attributed to him by those who, it now appeared, knew him well, and which must be the guiding fact in all the captain-general's dealings with him. His cunning must be met by all the cunning that Leclerc's united council could muster, or destruction would lurk under the pretended pacification. Accordingly, the whole of Leclerc's policy henceforth proceeded on the supposed fact of Toussaint L'Ouverture's being the prince of dissemblers.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

RECEDING.

LECLERC was eager to receive proposals of peace—to owe a respite to dissimulation itself, rather than continue the war under his present difficulties. It was weary work, keeping up a show before the eyes of the blacks, when, of the twelve thousand soldiers whom he had brought with him, five thousand had fallen in battle, and five thousand more were in the hospitals. Twenty thousand had arrived within a few weeks from France, and of these scarcely eleven thousand remained fit for service. Happy, indeed, was Leclerc to receive replies to his overtures of peace, and anxious was he to tes-

tify every respect to the generals whom he had lately insulted and defied. He revoked their outlawry, commending them to the esteem and good offices of those whom he had desired to deliver them as traitors. It is true, he transmitted to France magnificent accounts of the surrender of the blacks, of their abject supplications for their lives, and of the skill and prowess by which he had subdued the rebels and restored the colony to France. But these boastings were not known in St. Domingo, though the true state of the case was whispered in Paris, as regarded the mortality among the white troops, and the formidable influence still retained by the negro leaders.

Leclerc invited Toussaint to visit him at Cap, as well aware, doubtless, as Toussaint himself that this open indication of amity was necessary to protect the army from the ill-will of the blacks, who would not believe, on any other authority than L'Ouverture's own, that he had made peace with the invaders.

It was a mournful though showy demonstration, and all parties were glad when it was over. As L'Ouverture rode from Le Dondon to Cap Français, followed by a guard of three hundred and fifty horse, he was greeted by the inhabitants with the profoundest respect. Only in by-places, or from the depths of some wood, did a few voices sing, in negro language, the new song which was spreading over the island in praise of August—exhorting to patience and peace till August. As he entered the town of Cap, the thunder of artillery reverberated from the heights around. Every fort along the coast, every vessel in the roads, fired its salute; and the inhabitants of every color issued from their houses to pay honor to their adored L'Ouverture.

Leclerc stood ready to receive him, and to administer to him the oath of allegiance in the hall of the Government-house, the doors of which stood wide, and were carefully kept so by Toussaint's own guard, who would not for a moment let their commander be hidden from their sight. They formed in the Walk and in the court of the Government-house, remaining in fighting order, with drawn sabres, during the whole interview between the late and the present commander-in-chief.

With an unaltered countenance, Toussaint once more took the oath of allegiance to France—the oath which it had never been his desire to break. He smiled when he heard this simple act proclaimed by another roar of artillery, such as might have greeted a victory. Leclerc frowned; for it was not followed, as he had hoped, by acclamations. The echoes died away into deep silence.

It was an awkward moment. Leclerc hoped that Toussaint would lead the conversation. But Toussaint was deep in thought. Gazing on the anxious and sickly face of the captain-general, he was grieving at heart that he, and so many thousands more who might have lived long and useful lives at home, should be laid

low in the course of a bad enterprise against the liberties of the natives. The mournful gaze of his mild eyes confused the captain-general, so that he said the first thing that occurred, in order to break the silence. He observed that he understood that there was some business yet standing over for settlement between the parties who had so happily assembled at last. He had no doubt that General Toussaint would see clearly that in his allegiance to France was involved the duty of accounting to the Government for the wealth of the island, whether open to estimate, or concealed in the mornes or elsewhere.

"I have heard something of this before," said Toussaint, "and am as ignorant as yourself of any buried treasure. In this island Nature is so perpetually bountiful, that we have not the temptation, which we are told exists elsewhere, to amass wealth against a time of dearth. I have no treasure."

"If so, how could you have proposed to remain out of the bounds of the law, as you did till lately? Nature is not bountiful on the mountain peaks, which must then have been your abode. At least, Nature does not there bring forth arms and ammunition. Without treasure with which to purchase supplies, how would you have obtained arms and ammunition?"

"I should have taken yours."

Leclerc saw that even his own followers were more disposed to applaud than resent these words, and he therefore changed the topic.

"It is fortunate, then, for all parties," said he, "that future struggles are avoided. We are friends. Let it go abroad through the whole island that we are friends."

Toussaint made no reply. Leclerc continued:

"You, general, and your troops, will be employed and treated like the rest of my army. With regard to yourself, you desire repose." Looking round, he repeated the words emphatically, "You desire repose—and you deserve it. After a man has sustained for several years the Government of St. Domingo, I apprehend he needs repose. I leave you at liberty to retire to which of your estates you please. I rely so much on the attachment you bear the colony of St. Domingo, as to believe you will employ what moments of leisure you may have during your retreat in communicating to me your ideas respecting the means proper to be taken to cause agriculture and commerce again to flourish. Respecting your forces and those of General Christophe, I hold full information. As soon as a list and statement of the troops under General Dessalines are transmitted to me, I will communicate my instructions as to the positions they are to take."

"I will send a messenger from my guard to General Dessalines this day," said Toussaint. "I shall be passing near his post on my way to my house at Pongaudin, and he shall have your message."

"This day?" said Leclerc, in a tone of some constraint. "Will you not spend this day with us?"

"I can not," replied Toussaint. "I must be gone to my home."

As soon as it was believed that he was fairly out of hearing, the acts of the morning were proclaimed throughout Cap Français as the PARDON of Generals Toussaint and Christophe. This proclamation was afterward published, by Leclerc's orders, in the *Gazette du Cap*, where it was read by Toussaint in his study at Pongaudin.

"See!" said he, pointing out the paragraph to Pascal with a smile. "This is the way of men with each other. See the complacency with which one man pardons another for the most necessary or the best deed of his life!"

During a halt on the road to Pongaudin, Isaac and Aimée appeared. Aimée was tearful, but her face was happy. So were her words.

"Oh, father!" she said, "who could have hoped, after what has happened, that all would so soon be well?"

"I am rejoiced to see you happy, my children."

"And you, father—you are happy? Honored as you are—the colony at peace—all parties friends—no more divisions—no more struggles in families! Father, answer me. Is it not all well?"

"No, my child."

"Are you unhappy, father?"

"Yes, my child."

"I am quite disappointed—quite grieved," said Aimée, drawing back from his arms to look in his face.

"Vincent gave us a glorious account on Tortuga," said Isaac, "of the welcome you had at Cap. We thought—"

"I did not see Vincent at Cap."

"He was not there; but he knew all—"

"But, father," said Aimée, "you will see General Vincent. You will see him at Pongaudin. Now that you have done as he did—now that you are friends with the French, as he is, you will see him, father?"

"I have never done as Vincent did, Aimée; and my friendship with the French is what it ever was. If Vincent comes as your husband, I will see him as such. As a friend, I can not. Is he your husband, my love?"

"No."

"He is to be your husband?"

"If you would see him. If he was your friend. He urges me, father, and Madame Leclerc and Isaac urge me; but I can not marry him yet. Father, you do not know how much my heart is with you and my mother."

"Are you happy, Aimée?"

"Madame Leclerc is very kind, and Vincent's love is every thing that ought to make me happy; but—"

"Will you go home with me, my child?"

"How glad I should be if only you loved Vincent!"

"I can not, Aimée. Would that I could."

"Then, when I have married him, you will see him as my husband? I can not marry till my heart is more at ease—till I see every body as friendly as Vincent said they were. But when we are married we will come to Pongaudin. May we?"

"Come, my dear, when you will. Your parents' home and hearts will always be open to you. Meantime, write often to us, Aimée."

"Oh yes, I will. I will write very often, and you will answer. I have heard perpetually of my mother and of poor Géniffrède. But where is Placide? I thought we should have met him. Was not he at Cap?"

"At Cap? No, indeed! He was too heart-broken to be at Cap to-day."

"I wish I could understand it all!" said Aimée, sadly. "I am sure there are many things that I do not know or comprehend. I thought all had been right now, and yet you and Placide are unhappy. I can not understand it all."

"Time will explain, my child. There will come a day when all doubts will be cleared up and all woes at an end—when the wicked will cease from troubling, love, and the weary be at rest."

"Must you be going, father, already? Oh, I wish—"

And she looked at Isaac as if purposing to go to Pongaudin. Isaac had, however, promised Madame Leclerc to return by an appointed hour. There could be no difficulty, he said, in going to Pongaudin any day; but to-day he had promised that they would both return to Madame Leclerc. Aimée, therefore, bade her father farewell for the present—only for a very little while. He must tell her mother that they should certainly meet very soon.

In the piazza at Pongaudin Toussaint found Christophe.

"I wish," said Christophe, "you would send to Dessalines not only the captain-general's message, but your own request that he will yield."

"I can not, Henri."

"But he may spoil all by holding out."

"I have done what I can in yielding myself. I can do no more."

"You approve our act? Surely you do not repent of what you have done?"

"I can not repent of what I could not avoid. But enough of business for to-day, my friend. Where is Madame Christophe? Where are your children? Bring them here, and let us enjoy leisure and friendship once more, while we can."

"We will. But, Toussaint, if you could only say that you are satisfied that we have done what is best, it would relieve me much."

"I can not, Henri. But be assured I fully acquiesce. One has not always the comfort of being able to acquiesce."

"Can you say, then, that you forgive me in as far as you think me wrong?"

"Can you doubt it?" replied Toussaint, turning upon him a countenance full of frank affection. "Are you not a friend of many years?"

"God forgive me if I have misled you, Toussaint!"

CHAPTER XXXV.

SUSPENSE.

NATURE wrought with the blacks this season for the fulfillment of their hopes and the defense of their precarious liberties. Never, within the remembrance of the young people at Pongaudin, had the heat set in so early, and the month of May been so sickly in the towns. To the eyes of such as Génifrède, who were ever on the watch for signs, it might almost seem that they saw Pestilence floating, on her poison-dropping wings, beneath the clouds which sailed from all quarters of the sky to the mountain peaks; clouds muttering in thunder, and startling the intruders with terrific lightnings from night to night. The reports of fever having broken out here and there among the invaders became more and more frequent. At first, those who were watching the times the most intently concluded that, early as the season was, "the wish" must be "father to the thought," and believed little of what they heard. But, before Toussaint had been ten days at Pongaudin, it was certain that disease was raging to such an extent among the French troops at Cap, that the captain-general had retired to Tortuga to join his lady, and others of the expedition who were the most carefully guarded. The garrison at St. Marc was thinning, Thérèse sent word; and the country people conveyed to Pongaudin the news that funerals were becoming daily more frequent at Limbé, Le Dauphin, and other posts along the northern shore.

Not for this, however, was there any relaxation of the vigilance with which L'Ouverture was watched by the foe. His mode of life was simple, and open to the observation of any who chose to look on. He improved his gardens—he read much—he interested himself in Denis's studies—he rode out daily, and conversed everywhere with the people by the way-side. He wrote many letters, sometimes with his own hand, and sometimes employing that of his friend M. Pascal, who, with his wife, resided with the Ouvertures. Toussaint also received many letters, and a perpetual succession of visitors—of applicants about matters of business, as it seemed. The only mystery was how all his dispatches were sent to their destination. This was a mystery which grew out of the French practice of intercepting his correspondence. Accidents had happened to so many of his letters during the first week, that he presently learned the necessity of some plan for securing the privacy of his correspondence; and some plan he did devise which quite succeeded,

as appeared from the French general having recourse to a new mode of surveillance—that of setting spies on the person and movements of the black chief.

Toussaint's family were alarmed at finding his steps tracked and his repose watched. They heard incessantly of his path being crossed in his rides; and they knew that many of the trifling messages which were brought, at all hours of the day and night, to be delivered into L'Ouverture's own ear, were mere devices to learn whether he was at home. They saw that their grounds were never private; and felt that eyes watched them from the outer darkness when their saloon was lighted for their evening employments and amusements. Toussaint smiled at the alarms of his family, admitting the fact of this incessant *espionage*, but asking what harm it did, and pointing out that it was only an inconvenience of a weeks' duration. He would not hear of any strengthening of his guard. To increase his guard would be to encourage and authorize the suspicions which he was now daily weakening. He had nothing to conceal; and the sooner the invaders satisfied themselves of this, the better for all parties.

In answer to Madame L'Ouverture's frequent speculations as to what Leclerc could fix his suspicions on, Toussaint said he was probably supposed to be in communication with Dessalines. He thought so from his never approaching the mornes in his rides without finding French soldiers overlooking his proceedings from every point of the hills. He was not in communication with Dessalines. He did not know, and he wished not to know, even where he was—whether with the Bellairs, or training his soldiers elsewhere for further warfare. Dessalines had never submitted; and, while this was the case, it was obviously prudent for those who had made terms to know nothing of any plans of his to which they might wish success. Thérèse would not compromise the Ouvertures by living with them in the present state of affairs. She remained quietly on her husband's estate near St. Marc, only corresponding frequently with her friends at Pongaudin, in letters which all the world might see.

The chief subject of this correspondence was the fever-hospitals preparing at St. Marc, as at all the other towns on the coast, for the reception of the sick whites. Whatever might be Thérèse's feelings toward the whites, her compassion toward sick persons of every color was stronger. Her gentle nature asserted itself whenever weakness and suffering appealed to it; and this season she began to inspire that affection in her neighbors, to establish that character for devoted charity, which afterward made her the idol of the people. If her husband had been with her, he would probably have forbidden her to save the lives of any of that race whom he desired to exterminate. But though she could, perhaps, have taken away life

with her own hand on the battle-field with the cry of liberty in her ear, she could form no compact with such an ally as pestilence. In the season of truce and retreat, in the absence of the sights and sounds of the conflict, she became all the woman—the gentle spirit—to whom the colony for this time looked up, as sent to temper her husband's ferocity, and wisely to direct his strengthening passions. She who was so soon after "the good empress" was now the Sister of Charity, actually forgetting former wrongs in present compassion for the helpless, and ministering to the sick without thought whether, on recovery, they would be friends or foes. It was matter of speculation to many besides the Overtures, whether the invaders omitted the opportunity of making a hostage of her because their sick needed her services, or because they were grateful for her offices, or because they knew Dessalines well enough to be aware that, so far from such an act bringing him to submission, it would exasperate his ferocity, and draw down new sufferings and danger upon the discouraged whites.

One evening, the household of the Overtures were where it was now they went to be at sunset—under the trees, on a grassy slope of the gardens fronting the west. There they usually sat at this hour, to see the sun sink into the ocean; the darkness following almost as quickly as if that great fire were indeed quenched in the waters. On this occasion the sun was still half an hour above the horizon, when Madame Dessalines appeared in her riding-dress, and, as she said, in haste. She spoke apart with Madame L'Ouverture and Toussaint, and presently called Génifrède to the conference.

Thérèse had of late wanted help at St. Marc—help in directing the nursing of the sick. Now she must have it. M. Papalier was ill—very ill. The people of the house where he lived insisted upon sending him into the hospital this very night if good attendance was not provided for him; and now—

Thérèse did not yet seem quite clear why this event had determined the moment of her application for Génifrède's assistance. She was agitated. She could only say that Génifrède had nursed Dessalines well, and she must have her help again now.

"You will go, Génifrède," said her father, "that Madame Dessalines may be set at liberty to nurse M. Papalier herself."

"No, no," said Thérèse, trembling. Génifrède also said "No."

"You would not have me nurse *him*?" said Thérèse. "Any one else! Ask me to save Rochambeau. Send me to Tortuga to raise Leclerc from the brink of the grave, but do not expect me to be *his* nurse again."

"I do hope it from you. I expect it of you, when you have considered the tenfold mercy of nursing *him* with your own hands. Think of the opportunity you will give him of retrieving wrongs if he lives, and of easing his soul if he dies. How many of us would desire, above

all things, to have those whom we have injured beside our dying pillow, to make friends of them at last! Let M. Papalier die grateful to you if he must die, and give him a new heart toward you if he survives."

"It was not this that I intended," said Thérèse. "Génifrède will do every thing under my care. You shall have my help, Génifrède."

"No," said Génifrède. "Do not play the tempter with me. Find some one else. You will have much to answer for if you make me go."

"What temptation, Génifrède?" asked her mother.

"Do not press her," said Toussaint, who read his child's mind. "You shall not be urged, Génifrède."

"You do not know—I myself do not know," said Génifrède, hurriedly, to Madame Dessalines, "what might happen—what I might be tempted to do. You know—you have read what some nurses did in the plague at Milan—in the plague in London—in the night—with wet cloths—"

"Do not speak of it. Stay here, Génifrède. I can do without you."

"If," continued Génifrède, "they could do that for money—if the tempter moved their hands to that deed with the sight of mere rings and watches, what might not a wretched creature do, at such a time, with revenge muttering forever in her heart! My ear is weary of it here; and there—I can not go."

"No, you can not," said Thérèse.

"Christ strengthen you, my child," said Toussaint, "as Thérèse is strengthening! She can already serve those whom she and you once hated alike; and she is about to save her foe of foes."

"No, you will not save M. Papalier," said Génifrède.

"L'Ouverture is a prophet, as all men are in proportion as they are Christians," said Thérèse. "If he says I shall save my enemy, I believe I shall."

"You will at least try. If you are going, go; the sun is setting," said Toussaint. "What escort have you?"

"Old Dessalines and another. I want no more."

"Old Dessalines!" said Toussaint, smiling; "then he must have wine. I must see him."

"He is here," said Thérèse, calling him.

The old man was indeed lingering near, preferring the chance of a word from L'Ouverture even to supper and wine within. He was ready enough to tell his story: that he lived as butler at General Dessalines's; and that, though master and servant had changed places, he liked the new times better than the old. He was treated with more respect now by every body than when he was a negro tradesman, even though he then had a slave of his own. The place of butler suited him, too. General Dessalines and his lady drank only water; and

they left him to manage the wine-cellar just as he liked, except at the present time, when a dreadful quantity of wine was wanted for the convalescents. It frightened him to think how soon the cellar might be emptied if they went on at this rate. Old Dessalines was glad he had come to Pongaudin to-day. He had not only seen L'Ouverture, but had heard from L'Ouverture's own lips that General Dessalines's cellars should never be quite empty while there was wine at Pongaudin.

When Toussaint resumed his seat under the tree, where the Pascals, Euphrosyne, Placide, and Denis remained (the rest having gone into the house with Thérèse), he found Denis discussing with M. Pascal the principle and policy of nursing the sick who were hereafter to be mown down on the battle-field. Denis had been reminded that this was a time of peace, and that he was not authorized to anticipate more battle-fields: and his reply had shown that he had no faith in this peace, but looked forward, like others of his color, to August and its consequences. He was not contradicted here; and he went on to ask whether the Crusaders (his favorite warriors) nursed the wounded and sick heathens whom they found on the road and in the cities they took.

"They were no Christians if they did not," said Euphrosyne.

"It was a savage age," observed Placide.

"Still they were the representatives of the Christianity of their day," said Afra; "and Christianity requires us to do good to those who use us ill."

"The Crusaders," said Toussaint, "lived in the early days of that Christianity which is to endure as long as the race of man. Like others, they did their part in acting out one of its principles. That one was not love of enemies—which yet remains for us."

"I agree with you," said Pascal. "There are many ways of warring for the Cross. Theirs was one, ours is another."

"You always speak as if you were a black, M. Pascal," said Denis.

"I would fain be a negro in heart and temper, Denis, if what your father thinks of the vocation of negroes be true."

"But about these ways of warring for the Cross?" inquired Afra.

"I mean, and L'Ouverture, I think, means," said Pascal, "that nothing can immediately alter the nature of men; that the glorious Gospel itself is made to change the face of the world gradually; all the more surely, because slowly and naturally. This seed of life was cast upon the flood of human passions, and the harvest must not be looked for till after many days. Meantime it sprouts out, now here, now there, proving that it is alive and growing; but the harvest is not yet."

"We find one trace of the Gospel here and another there," said Toussaint; "but a Christian nation, or race, or class of people, who has seen?"

"Not in the earliest days?" asked Euphrosyne. "Were not the first confessors and martyrs a Christian class?"

"They were so according to their intention, to their own idea," said Toussaint. "They were votaries of the one Christian principle most needed in their time. The noble men, the courageous women, who stood, calm and resolved, in the midst of the amphitheatre, with the heathen altar behind them, the hungry tiger before them, and a careless or scoffing multitude ranged all around—these were strong witnesses to the great principle of Faith—noble proofs of the power of living and dying for things unseen. This was their function. It was for others to show forth the humility and modesty in which, as a class, they failed."

"The anchorites," said Pascal, "each in his cave, solitary, abstemious, showed forth in its strength the principle of Devotion, leaving Charity unthought of."

"And then the nun—" said Toussaint.

"What possible grace of religion did the nun exhibit?" asked Euphrosyne.

"The original nun, Euphrosyne, was inspired with the reverence of Purity. In an age of license, those who were devoted to spiritual things were the salt of the earth. But in their worship of purity they outraged human love."

"The friar," said Pascal, "was a perpetual emblem of Unworldliness. He forced upon the admiration of a self-seeking world the peace of poverty, the repose of soul which is troubled with no thought for the morrow. But for other teachers, however, industry would have been despised—the great law of toil would have remained unrecognized."

"The Crusaders worked hard enough," said Denis. "Thousands and thousands of them died of their toils, besides the slain."

"They were the apostles of Zeal," said M. Pascal. "For the honor of the Gospel they suffered and died. They overlooked all that it teaches of toleration and universal love—of peace on earth and good-will to men."

"None of these Christians," said Afra, "appear to have had much concern for men. They seem to have lived for God and the faith, without love or care for those for whose sake God gave the faith."

"Just so," said her husband. "That part of our religion had not yet come into action. The first step taken toward this action was one which united with it the former devotion to God. The organization of the great Church of Christ united, in the intentions of those who formed it, care for the glory of God and the salvation of men. It was a great step."

"But still," said Euphrosyne, "there was not the Charity, the living for the good of men, soul and body, which was what Christ taught and practiced."

"That, Euphrosyne, was a later fruit; but it is ripening now. We have more Sisters of Charity than contemplative nuns at this time. There are hospitals in every Christian land for

the sick and the aged. It is remembered now, too, that Christ had compassion on the blind, and the deaf, and the insane; and charity to these is now the Christianity of a multitude."

"And what is their defect?" asked Denis. "What essential do they overlook, as the anchorite and the Crusader overlooked this same Charity?"

"It may be Liberty—regard to the Christian liberty of others; it may be—"

"Let us not look too closely into their failures," said Toussaint. "Let us not judge our brethren. These are too near our own time for us to be just judges. We see their charity—the brightest light yet in the constellation of Christian principles; let us be thankful that our eyes have seen it. It is brightening, too; so that day telleth to day of its increase, and night is witness of it unto night. It is now not only the sick and infirm in body that are cared for; but I am told there has been a man in England who has taken such pity on those who are sick and deformed in soul as to have explored the most loathsome of European prisons in their behalf. There has been a Briton who pitied the guilty above all other sufferers, and devoted to them his time, his fortune, his all. He will have followers till Christendom itself follows him; and he will thus have carried forward the Gospel one step. The charity which grieves more for the deformity of the soul than the evils of the body is so far higher a charity, that it may almost be called a new principle."

"What remains?" asked Euphrosyne.

"Do you see any thing further to be done, father?" inquired Denis.

With a mournful smile, Toussaint replied that mankind had advanced but a little way yet. The world was very far from being Christianized.

"In practice," said Euphrosyne. "But, supposing us all to fulfill what has been exemplified from the earliest days till now, do you suppose that many principles remain to be acted upon?"

"No doubt. If I saw none, I should believe, from all experience, that revelations (or, rather, verifications of what Christ revealed) will succeed each other as men exist. But, from the beginning till now, individuals here and there have lived by the principles which classes and nations have overlooked. By a solitary ray shining here and there, we may foretell something of the new lights about to rise upon the world. There will be more privileged classes, Euphrosyne; and, Denis, these privileges are lying within our grasp."

"A new charity, father?"

"A new charity, my boy. To solace the sick and infirm is good. To tend the diseased soul is better. But there is a higher charity still."

"To do good to those who hate us," said M. Pascal: "in doing good, to conquer not only our love of ease and our fear of pain, but our prejudices, our just resentments, our re-

membrance of injuries, our disgust at oppression, our contempt of pride: to forget or conquer all these through the love of men as men, is indeed a higher charity than any which classes have yet illustrated."

"The negroes are the race that illustrate it," said Toussaint, with calm confidence. "The Gospel is for the whole world. It sprang up among the Jews; the white Gentiles hold it now; and the negroes are destined to fulfill their share. They are to illustrate its highest charity. For tokens, mark their meek and kindly natures, the softness and the constancy of their affections, and (whenever tried) their placability. Thus prepared, liberty is about to be opened to them in a region of civilization. When God has given them the strength of the free, it will exalt their meekness and their love into that highest charity of which we have spoken. I myself am old; and though I shall do what I can on this side the grave, I can not see the great day except in faith. But my children may witness at least its dawn."

"In those days wars will cease," said Euphrosyne, recalling the thoughts she had revolved on the day of the death of Moyses: "there will be no bloodshed, no violence—no punishment of injuries to others, while your people forgive their own."

"So will it be, I trust," said Toussaint.

"Why not, then, begin now? Why not act upon your whole principle at once?"

"Because the nature of the negro has been maimed. He has been made selfish, cowardly, and indolent. He must be educated back into a fair condition; and this necessary education circumstances have imposed. We are compelled to the self-denial, toil, and danger of warfare, in order to obtain the liberty which is to carry us forward. I once hoped otherwise, Euphrosyne; but I now see the bracing process of defensive warfare to be inevitable, and, on the whole, good for my people. Their liberties, thus hardly won, will be prized so as to shut out the future danger of war. If, however, one stroke is inflicted for other purposes than defense—if one life is taken for vengeance, we shall be set back long and far in our career. It shall not be under my rule. Alas for those who succeed me, if they permit it! It will not only make the first black empire a by-word throughout the world, but it will render the Christian civilization of my people difficult and slow."

Toussaint spoke like a ruler; and he was virtually still a sovereign, as he had been for years past. Nor were the tokens of sovereignty altogether wanting. At this moment, as was continually happening, dispatches arrived, on affairs of great importance, on which he must think and act.

"See what these French commanders are doing," said he, handing his letters to M. Pascal, "at the very moment that they disclaim all intention of enslaving the negroes! What are they doing yonder but recommencing slav-

ery? It must not be. Are you disposed for business?"

"This moment," said M. Pascal, springing up before he had finished the letters. "Will you provide a messenger? Slavery is restored; and there is not a moment to be lost."

As in old days, lights were ordered into the library; and the royal-souled negro dictated his commands to his friendly secretary, who smiled at such an hour at the thought of the exultation of the French court over the "surrender" and "submission" of the blacks.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

DEPARTURE WITHOUT RETINCE.

"STAND where you are, Thérèse—there, at the foot of the bed! Stir not an inch without my leave! I have let you have your own way too much of late. I call for hours, and you never come. I will not let you out of my sight again!"

So said M. Papalier, in the delirium of his fever, as Madame Dessalines was nursing him in his chamber at St. Marc. It was a sad and dreary office, but she had motive to go through with it. The more he wandered back in his talk to the old days, the more strongly she felt herself called upon to use the present generously. The more imperious the tone of command with which he addressed her, the more easily could she pass over the error. There was a degree of pleasure in giving momentary ease to him, while he could not recognize the hand that bestowed it. She dreaded, however, for the sake of both, an hour of sanity. If he slept for a short interval, she feared to hear him speak coherently on his waking; and the more, because little or no chance of his recovery remained. The thought of his carrying forward into the hour of death the insolent temper of his life was terrible. She almost hoped that, if he was to die, it would be without having been aware that he and his nurse were no longer master and slave.

She was his sole nurse. There was no alternative between this and her not being with him at all. It was impossible to allow any servant, any stranger, to hear his talk of old times—to witness the mode in which he addressed her. Except the physician, no one but herself entered his chamber during his waking hours.

She now sat, as he desired, full in his view, at the foot of the bed, encouraging repose by her stillness, and gladly turning from the ghastly countenance of the dying man to the scene without—visible in all its splendor, as the room had a north aspect, and the window stood wide to admit the breathing wind from the sea. The deep blue sea, under the heaven of a lighter blue, looked glorious from the shaded apartment. The rustle of the trees in the courtyard, and the fall of water there, spoke of cool-

ness, and seemed to make themselves heard by the patient, even in the midst of the fever-flames by which he was consumed; for he spoke of trees and fountains, and fancied himself at Arabe. He asked Thérèse to sing, and told her what to sing. She did not wish to refuse; she would have indulged him; but there was a choking in her throat which forbade it. Papalier was not long peremptory. From commanding, his voice sank to complaining; from complaining, to the muttering of troubled slumber; and at length into the silence of sleep.

Thérèse sat still, as before, looking out upon the sea till its brightness, combined with the whispers of foliage and waters, made her eyes heavy, and disposed her to sleep too. Leaning back against the bedpost, she was dreaming that she was awake, when she heard her name so called that she awoke with a start. Papalier was himself again, and was demanding where he was, and what had been the matter. He felt the blister on his head; he complained of the soreness and stiffness of his mouth and tongue; he tried to raise himself, and could not; and, on the full discovery of his state, he wept like a child.

Gently, but not tenderly, did Thérèse endeavor to comfort him. He had irrecoverably forfeited her tenderness. Gentle, however, she was as she told him that his state now, however painful, was better than an hour ago, when he was unconscious of it. Gentle was her hand when she wrapped fresh, cool leaves round his burning head. Gentle was her voice when she persuaded him to drink. Gentle was the expression of her eye when she fixed its gaze upon his face, and by its influence caused him to check, like a child, the sobs that shook his frame.

"Thérèse," said he, "I am dying. I feel that I am dying. Oh! what must I do?"

"We must wait upon God's pleasure. Let us wait in quiet. Is there any thing that can give you quiet of mind or body?"

Tears stole again from the heavy, closing eyes.

"We are all familiar with the end of our lives, almost from their beginning," said Thérèse. "There is nothing strange or surprising in it. The great thing is to throw off any burden—any anxiety—and then to be still. An easy mind is the great thing, whether recovery is at hand or—"

"Do not talk of recovery. I shall not recover."

"Can I do any thing—listen to any thing—so as to give you ease? Shall I call Father Gabriel? You may find comfort in speaking to him."

"I want to speak to you first. I have not half done the business I came for: I have not half secured my estates for my daughters."

"I believe you have. I know that L'Ouverture fully intends—"

"What does it matter what L'Ouverture intends! I mean no contempt to him by saying

so. He intends very well, I dare say; but in the scramble and confusion that are at hand, what chance will my poor orphan girls have for their rights?"

"Fear nothing for them. If there is to be a struggle, there is no doubt whatever as to how it will end. The French army will be expelled—"

"You do not say so! You can not think so!"

"I am certain of it. But the white proprietors will be as safe in person and property, as welcome to L'Ouverture, as during the years of his full authority. You were not here to see it; but the white proprietors were very happy, perfectly satisfied, during those years (at least, all of them who were reasonable men). I can undertake for L'Ouverture that your daughters' income from their estates shall be sent to them at Paris, if you desire them to stay there; or the estates shall be sold for their benefit; or, if you will trust them to my care—"

"No, no! Impossible!"

"I am the wife of a general, and second to no woman on the island," said Thérèse, calmly. "I have power to protect your daughters; and, in an hour like this, you can not doubt my sincerity when I say that I have the will."

"It can not be, Thérèse. I do not doubt you—neither your word nor your will. But it is impossible, utterly."

"Is there strength, even in the hour of death, to trample on the dark race? Oh! better far to trample on the prejudices of race! Will you not do this?"

"You talk absurdly, Thérèse. Do not trouble me with nonsense now. You will undertake, you say, that Toussaint shall secure to my daughters the estates I have left them by will. That is, in case of the blacks getting the upper hand. If they are put down, my will secures every thing. Happily, my will is in safe hands. Speak, Thérèse! You engage for what I have just said?"

"As far as warranted by my knowledge of L'Ouverture and his intentions, I do. If, through his death or adversity, this resource should fail, your daughters shall not suffer while my husband and I have property."

"Your husband! property! It is strange," muttered Papalier. "I believe you, however. I trust you, Thérèse; and I thank you, love."

Thérèse started at that old word—that old name. Recovering herself, she inquired,

"Have you more to ask of me? Is there any other service I can render you?"

"No, no. You have done too much for me—too much, considering the new order of affairs."

"I have something to ask of you. I require an answer to one question."

"You require!"

"I do. By the right of an outraged mother, I require to know who destroyed my child."

"Say nothing of that, Thérèse. You should know better than to bring such subjects before a dying man."

"Such subjects lie before the dead. Better

to meet them prepared—atoned for, in as far as atonement is yet possible. For your own sake and by my own right, I require to be told who destroyed my child."

"I did not, Thérèse."

"You did not! Is it possible? Yet in this hour you could not deceive me. I have accused you of the deed from that hour to this. Is it possible that I have wronged you?"

"I do not say that I disapproved of it—that I did not allow it, but I did not do it."

"Then you know who did it?"

"Of course I do."

"Who was it?"

"I swore long ago that I would not tell, and I never will. But you may lay the blame on me, my dear; for, as I told you, I permitted the deed. It was necessary. Our lives depended on it."

"May you not find your eternal death depend on it!" said Thérèse, agonized by suspicions as to whose hand it was by which her child had died. In a moment she formed a resolve which she never broke—never again to seek to know that which Papalier now refused to tell. A glance at the countenance before her filled her with remorse the next instant at what now seemed the cruel words she had just spoken.

"Let me bring Father Gabriel to you," said she. "He will give you whatever comfort God permits."

"Do not suppose I shall tell Father Gabriel what you want to discover," replied Papalier. "He has no business with more than my share of the affair, which is what you know already. I am too weak to talk—to Father Gabriel, or any one else."

"But you need comfort. You will rest better afterward."

"Well, well: in the evening, perhaps. I must be quiet now. Comfort, indeed!" he muttered. "Yes, I want comfort enough, in the horrid condition I am in. But there is no comfort till one lies dead. I wish I was dead."

He fell into a restless doze. Moved by his misery, and melted by the thought that she had wronged him, in all these years, by harboring the image of his hand on her infant's throat—distracted, too, by the new doubts that had arisen—Thérèse prayed and wept, wept and prayed, on behalf of Papalier and all sinners. Again and again she implored that these wretched hatreds, these miserable strifes, might be all hushed in the grave—might be wholly dissolved in death.

She was just stealing to the door, intending to send for Father Gabriel, that he might be in readiness for the dying man's confession, when Papalier started, cast his eyes round the room hurriedly, and exclaimed,

"It is in vain to talk of attaching them. If one's eye is off them for one moment— Oh! you are there, Thérèse! I thought, after all I had done for you—after all I had spent upon you—I thought you would not go off with the rest. Don't go—Thérèse—Thérèse!"

"I am here," said she, perceiving that he no longer saw.

"I knew you would stay," he said, very faintly. "I can not spare you, my dear."

The last words he said were,

"I can not spare you—remember—Thérèse!"

To the pang of the thought that he had died unconfessed succeeded the question, more painful still,

"Could religious offices avail any thing to a soul wholly un sanctified? Is there a promise that any power can put such a spirit into immediate congeniality with the temper of Heaven? Among the many mansions, is there one which would not be a prison to such? to the proud one who must there feel himself 'poor and miserable, and blind and naked!'"

CHAPTER XXXVII.

JUNE.

OF the letters written by Toussaint and Pascal on the evening when news arrived of the imposition of compulsory labor on the negroes, some reached their destination; but one did not. That one was to L'Ouverture's aid, Fontaine, at Cap Français. It contained the following:

"It is said that General Leclerc is in a bad state of health at Tortuga. Of this you will inform me. If you see the captain-general, be sure to tell him that the cultivators are no longer disposed to obey me, for the planters wish to set them to work at Hericourt, which they certainly ought not to do.

"I have to ask you whether any one near the person of the captain-general can be gained to procure the release of D—, who would be very useful to me from his influence at La Nouvelle and elsewhere.

"Acquaint Gingembre that he is not to quit the Borgne, where the cultivators must not be set to work."

This letter never reached Fontaine, but was, instead, made the subject of a consultation in the captain-general's quarters. Amidst the boastings which he sent home, and by which France was amused, Leclerc felt that his thirty-five thousand soldiers had made no progress whatever in the real conquest of St. Domingo. He was aware that France had less power there than before she had alienated L'Ouverture. He felt that Toussaint was still the sovereign that he had been for ten years past. He knew that a glance of the eye, a lifting of the hand from Toussaint, wrought more than sheaves of ordinances from himself, and all the commendations and flatteries of the First Consul. Leclerc and the officers in his confidence could never take a morning ride or give an evening party—they could never hear a negro singing, or amuse themselves with children playing on the shore or in the woods, without

being reminded that they were intruders, and that the native and abundant loyalty of the inhabitants was all for their L'Ouverture, now that France had put him in opposition to herself. Leclerc and his confidential advisers committed the error of attributing all this to Toussaint's personal qualities; and they drew the false inference (most acceptable to the First Consul), that if Toussaint were out of the way, all would be well for the purposes of France. Having never seriously regarded the blacks as free men and fellow-citizens, these Frenchmen omitted to perceive that a great part of their devotion to Toussaint was loyalty to their race. Proceeding on this mistake, Leclerc and his council, sanctioned by the First Consul, ruined their work, lost their object, and brought irretrievable disgrace upon their names—some of which are immortalized only by the infamy of the act which ensued.

From day to day they endeavored to entrap Toussaint; but he knew it, surrounded as he was by faithful and vigilant friends. Day by day he was warned of an ambush here, of spies there, or of an attempt meditated for such an hour. During a fortnight of incessant designs upon his person, he so baffled all attempts as to induce a sort of suspicion among the French soldiery that he was protected by magic.

It was an anxious season for his family. Their only comfort was that it would soon be over; that this, like all other evils connected with the invasion, was to last only "till August;" the familiar words which were the talisman of hope throughout the island. The household at Pongaudin counted the days till August; but it was yet only the beginning of June, and the season passed heavily away. On one occasion, a faithful servant of Toussaint's was brought in dead—shot from a thicket which his master was expected to pass. On another, the road home was believed to be beset; and all the messengers sent by the family to warn him of his danger were detained on some frivolous pretext; and the household were at length relieved by his appearing from the garden, having returned in a boat provided by some of his scouts. Now and then some one mentioned retiring to the mountains; but Toussaint would not hear of it. He said it would be considered a breach of the treaty, and would forfeit all the advantages to be expected from a few weeks' patience. The French were, he knew, daily more enfeebled and distracted by sickness. Caution and patience, for two months more, would probably secure freedom without bloodshed. He had foreseen that the present perils would arise from the truce, and still believed that it had better not have been made. But, as he had agreed to it, the first breach should not be on his part.

If Toussaint owed his danger to Christophe, he owed him the protection by which he had thus far been preserved. Worn as he was by perpetual labor and anxiety, Henri seemed never to close his eyes in sleep during this anxious

season. He felt to the full his responsibility, from the hour of the first discovery of French treachery toward his friend. By day he was scouring the country in the direction of Toussaint's rides. By night he was patrolling round the estate. It seemed as if his eye pierced the deepest shades of the woods; as if his ear caught up whispers from the council-chamber in Tortuga. For Henri's sake, Toussaint ran no risks but such as duty absolutely required; for Henri's sake, he freely accepted these toils in his behalf. He knew it to be essential to Henri's future peace that his personal safety should be preserved through this season, and that Henri himself should be his chief guardian.

Henri himself did not ask him to give up his rides. It was necessary that his people should have almost daily proof that he was among them, safe and free. It was necessary that the French should discern no symptom of fear, of shrinking, of departure from the mode of life he had proposed on retiring to his estate. Almost daily, therefore, he rode; and exhilarating did he find the rapid exercise, the danger, and, above all, the knowledge he gained of the condition of his people, in fortunes and in mind, and the confidence with which they hailed him, the constancy with which they appealed to his authority wherever he appeared.

This knowledge enabled him to keep up more than the show of co-operation with the French in matters which concerned the welfare of the people. He pointed out gross abuses, and Leclerc hastened to remedy them. Leclerc consulted him occasionally in local affairs, and had his best advice. This kind of correspondence, useful and innocent, could not have been carried on to equal purpose but for Toussaint's rides.

By such excursions he verified a cause of complaint, concerning which he had received applications at home. In dispersing his troops over the colony, Leclerc had taken care to quarter a very large proportion in the districts near Gonaïves, so as to inclose the residence of Toussaint with the best of the French forces. The canton of Henneri was overcharged with these troops, so that the inhabitants were oppressed, and the soldiers themselves suffered from scarcity of food, and from the fever which raged in their crowded quarters. Having ascertained this to be the fact, Toussaint wrote to represent the case to Leclerc, and received a speedy and favorable reply. By Leclerc's command, General Brunet wrote that this was an affair which came within his department; that he was necessarily ignorant of the localities of St. Domingo and of their respective resources; and that he should be thankful for information and guidance from one who had a perfect knowledge of these circumstances. He proposed that General Toussaint should meet him in the centre of the canton of Henneri, and instruct him concerning the better distribution of the troops.

"See these whites!" said Toussaint, handing the letter to M. Pascal. "Till they find

they are wrong, they have no misgivings—they know every thing—and they are obliged at last to come and learn of old Toussaint."

"You will not meet General Brunet as he proposes?" said M. Pascal. "You will not place yourself in the centre of the canton, among their troops?"

"No, no, you will not! You will not think of going!" cried Madame L'Onverture.

"For once, Margot, you bear ill-will toward those who compliment your husband," said Toussaint, smiling. "But be easy; I shall not go to the canton of Henneri. If I walk into a pitfall, it shall not be after having seen it made. I must meet General Brunet, however. I shall invite him here, with an escort of twenty soldiers, promising to limit my own guard to that number."

"He will not come," said M. Pascal.

"I think he will; not because they trust me, for they know not what trust is; but because I could gain nothing by any injury to General Brunet and twenty soldiers that could compensate for a breach of the treaty."

"The gain from capture or violence would be all the other way, certainly," said Pascal, in a low voice.

"Henri will take care that General Brunet's is *bona fide* an escort of twenty. There is reason for the meeting taking place here. Maps will be wanted, and other assistance which we might not remember to provide elsewhere. General Brunet must be my guest, and Madame L'Onverture will make him admire our hospitality."

General Brunet immediately accepted the invitation, promising to present himself at Pongaudin on the tenth of June.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

A FEAT.

GENERAL BRUNET brought with him no more than his allotted twenty soldiers and a secretary. Christophe ascertained to his own satisfaction, and let the household know, that not another French soldier breathed within a circuit of some miles when the evening closed in, so that the ladies threw off constraint and fear together as the two generals, with their secretaries, retired to the library after coffee.

Placide had been with Christophe all day, and was the means by which the household had been assured of the tranquillity of the neighborhood. He was of the patrol which was to watch the roads during the night. It seemed improbable, however, that, of all nights, that should be chosen for an assault when the Onvertures must be particularly roused to observation, and when a French general was in their hands. Of all nights, this was probably the safest; yet Placide, glad, perhaps, to keep out of the way of a guest from Paris, chose to mount guard with Christophe.

Denis was permitted to be in the library, as the business was not private, and, to one who knew the country as well as he did, very entertaining. For a time he found it so, while all the five were stooping over the maps, and his father was explaining the nature of the localities and the interests of the inhabitants, and while words dropped from General Brunet which gave an insight into that object of Denis's strong curiosity—the French encampment on Tortuga. When all of this kind had been said, and the conversation turned upon points of military science or management, which he did not care about, Denis drew off to the window, and thence into the balcony, where he looked out upon the night—vainly, for it was cloudy, and there was yet no moon. The air was cool and pleasant, however, and he remained leaning over the balcony, revolving what he had heard, and picturing to himself the little court of Madame Leclere—so near, and yet out of his reach. While thus absorbed, it is probable that some distant voice of song instigated him to sing also. Like his race generally, Denis was almost always singing—always when alone and meditative. It is probable that some notes of the air sung by those who looked to August for freedom—sung by the whole negro population—now caught his ear; for he began, hardly to sing, but to murmur this popular air. The words were not heard within, and it would not have mattered if they had been, for they were in the negro language. But the air was by this time intelligible enough to the invaders. In the interest of conversation, nothing escaped the eye of Toussaint. He saw an exchange of glances between General Brunet and his secretary, and a half smile on the face of each which he did not like.

He thought it best to take no notice; but, far from leaving off, Denis sang louder as he sank deeper into reverie. M. Pascal became aware of some embarrassment and of its cause.

"Denis, you disturb us," he called out from the table.

They heard no more of Denis, and their business proceeded. Vexed, partly with himself, and partly at having been rebuked in General Brunet's hearing, he went round the house by the balcony, and thence to the upper gallery, which commanded the finest sea-view in the day-time, and the freshest sea-breezes at night. There, in a somewhat perverse mood, he sang for his own pleasure the air for which he had been checked for singing unconsciously. He remained there a long while—he did not know how long—till the moon rose, when he remembered that it must be midnight. As no one had called him, he supposed that the party in the library were still in consultation.

As his eye rested on the bay, while he was considering whether he must not go in, he perceived something dark lying on the waters between the island and the shore. As he strained his sight, and as the waned moon rose higher, he discovered that it was a ship. It was

strange. No ship ever had business there, though he had heard that there was a deep channel and good anchorage in that little bay. It was very strange. But something stranger still soon met his ear: sounds, first odd, then painful—horrible. There was some bustle below—on the beach, within the little gate—he thought even on the lawn. It was a scuffle; there was a stifled cry. He feared the guard were disarmed and gagged—attacked on the side of the sea, where no one dreamed of an assault, and where there was no Christophe to help. Denis knew, however, how to reach Christophe. He did the right thing. Lest his purpose should be prevented if he entered the house, he clambered up the roof to its ridge, and swung the heavy alarm-bell. Its irregular clang banished sleep in a moment from a circuit of many miles. It not only startled the ladies of the family from their beds, but every fisherman rushed from his hut upon the shore. Christophe and Placide were galloping to Pongaudin almost before they had drawn a breath. Every beast stirred in its lair, and every bird rustled in its roost. Rapid, however, as was the spread of sound, it was too late to save *L'Ouverture*.

L'Ouverture himself had but a few moments of uncertainty to endure. In the midst of earnest conversation, suspicious sounds were heard. The two Frenchmen rushed to the door of the library, and M. Pascal to the balcony. M. Pascal re-entered in an instant, saying,

"The house is surrounded—the lawn is crowded. Make no resistance, and they may spare your life."

"Hark! The bell! There is hope," said Toussaint. "No resistance! but let us gain time."

The door was burst open, and with General Brunet entered a personage whom he introduced as Admiral Ferrari, followed by a file of grenadiers.

"What can be your errand at this hour?" asked Toussaint.

"I have orders from the captain-general to arrest you," replied Admiral Ferrari. "Your guards are disarmed and bound. Our troops are everywhere. You are dead if you resist. Deliver up your sword!"

"I shall not resist such a force as you have thought necessary to bring against me," replied Toussaint, handing his sword to the admiral. "Am I to be a prisoner here in my own house?"

"No, indeed! I have orders to convey you and your family to Cap Français. No delay! To the boats this moment! You will find your family on board the frigate, or on the way to it."

"Do what you will with me; but Madame *L'Ouverture* is in weak health. Suffer her and my children to remain at home."

"Lose no more time, general. March! or we must carry you."

Voices of lamentation and of passion were heard in the corridor, which quickened L'Ouverture's movements more than threats or insults could have done. He left the library, and found the ladies of the household in the corridor—Margot weeping and trembling, and Génifrède addressing M. Coasson in a tone of high anger.

"You here, M. Coasson!" said Toussaint; "and availing yourself once more of the weakness and woes of women, I perceive."

"I came as guide," replied M. Coasson. "The admiral and his troops needed some one to show them the way; and, as you are aware, I was qualified to do so. I have always felt, too, that I had a sort of an appointment to fulfill with this young lady. Her kind expressions toward the whites on my last visit might be a sort of invitation to come again—with such a train as you see," pointing to the stiff row of grenadiers who stood behind.

Génifrède groaned.

"Make yourself happy with your train," said Toussaint as he seized the wretch by the collar, hurled him back among the grenadiers, and kicked him over as he lay—introducing great disorder into the formal arrangements of that dignified guard.

This would have been the last moment of Toussaint if General Brunet had not drawn his sword and commanded every one to stand back. His orders, he said, were to deliver his prisoner alive.

"Come, my love," said Toussaint to Madame L'Ouverture, "we are to sleep on board a frigate this night. Come, Génifrède! We may sleep in peace. General Brunet will hardly be able to digest your hospitality, my Margot; but you may sleep. Who else?" he asked, as he looked round upon his trembling household.

"We are following," said M. Pascal, who had his wife and Euphrosyne on either arm.

"Pardon me," said General Brunet. "Our orders extend only to General Toussaint and his family. You must remain. Reverend father," he said to Father Laxabon, "you may remain also—to comfort any friends of General Toussaint whom you may be able to meet with to-morrow. They will be inconsolable, no doubt."

M. Coasson whispered to the admiral, who said, in consequence, bowing to Euphrosyne,

"I can answer for this young lady being a welcome guest to Madame Leclere. If she will afford to a countryman the pleasure and honor of conveying her, it will give him joy to introduce her to a society worthy of her."

"I do not wish to see Madame Leclere," said Euphrosyne, speaking with surprising calmness, though her cheek was white as ashes. "I wish to be wherever I may best testify my attachment to these my honored friends in the day of their undeserved adversity."

She looked from M. Pascal to L'Ouverture.

"Stay with those who can be your guardians," said Toussaint.

"For our sakes," added Génifrède.

"Stay with us!" cried M. Pascal and Afra.

"Farewell, then," said Euphrosyne, extending her arms to Madame L'Ouverture.

"We are losing time," said General Brunet, as the clang of the alarm-bell was heard again. By his order, some soldiers went in search of the traitor who was ringing the bell, and others pushed the captive family before them toward the door. M. Coasson thrust himself between the parting friends, and began to count the family in order to tell who was missing. It would not do, he observed, to leave any behind.

"Lose no more time," said the admiral. "Those who may be left behind are cared for, I promise you. We have a hundred of them safe already."

"A hundred of whom?" asked Toussaint, as he walked.

"Of your friends," replied Admiral Ferrari.

This was too true. A hundred of Toussaint's most attached adherents had been seized this night. No one of them was ever again heard of in the island.

At the door of the mansion, Denis was brought forward, guarded. His eyes were flashing fire.

"The country is up!" he cried. "I got good service out of the old bell before they found me."

"Right, my boy! Thank you!" said his father, cheerfully.

"Give Génifrède to me, father. My mother is ready to sink."

Proudly he supported his sister to the boats, carrying her on so rapidly as to prevent the need of any soldier speaking to her.

There was an array of boats along the shore of the bay. Distant firing was heard during the whole time that the prisoners and the troops were embarking.

"They must be very much afraid of us," observed Denis, looking round as soon as he had taken his place beside his sister in the boat. "They have given us above a hundred guards apiece, I believe."

"They are afraid of us," said Toussaint.

"There is terrible fighting somewhere," murmured the weeping Margot. "I am afraid Placide is in the midst of it."

"He is in his duty if he be," said Toussaint.

Placide had discharged this kind of duty, however, and now appeared to fulfill the other—of sharing the captivity of his parents. He leaped into the boat, breathless, after it had pushed off from the shore.

"In time, thank God!" gasped he.

"He can hardly speak!" exclaimed his mother. "He is wet! He is wounded—cruelly wounded!"

"Not wounded at all, mother. Whole in heart and skin! I am soaked in the blood of our enemies. We have fought gloriously—in vain, however, for to-night. Latortue is shot—and Jasmin. There are few left but Christophe; but he is fighting like a lion."

"Why did you leave him, my son?" asked Toussaint.

"He desired me to come again and again, and I fought on. At last I was cut off from him. I could not give any more help there, and I saw that my business lay here. They say this frigate is the *Créole*. Whither bound, I wonder?"

"To Cap Français," replied the officer in the stern, "to join the *Héros*, now in the roads there."

"The *Héros*—a seventy-four, I think," said L'Ouverture.

"A seventy-four—you are correct," replied the officer. No one spoke again.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

TRUCE NO MORE.

WHEN TOUSSAINT set foot on the deck of the *Héros*, on the evening of the next day, the commander stood ready to receive him—and not only the commander. Soldiers also stood ready with chains, with which they lost no time in fettering the old man's ankles and wrists. While they were doing this, Toussaint quietly said to the commander,

"By my overthrow, the trunk of the tree of negro liberty is laid low—only the trunk. It will shoot out again from the roots—and they are many and deep."

The moment the soldiers stepped back and allowed access to him, Aimée was in his arms; and Isaac, in great agitation, presented himself.

"I will never leave you more, father!" said he. "These fetters! Nothing should have made me believe such treatment possible. I trusted Leclerc as firmly as I trusted you. I have been living with him while he meditated chains for you! I am humbled forever! All I can do now is to devote myself to you, as Placide did at the right time. Would I were Placide! I am humbled forever!"

"No, my son, not forever. It is a common lot to be humbled for the credulous confidence of youth. It is a safer and a nobler error, Isaac, than its opposite. It is better than unbelief in the virtue of man."

"You torture me with your goodness, father!"

"I deal with you as with myself, Isaac. In the young days of my freedom, I trusted falsely, as you have done. I believed in Bonaparte, as you have believed in Leclerc. We have both received a lesson; but I do not feel humbled forever, nor must you."

"Would I were Placide!" was all that Isaac could say.

"You are so good to Isaac and me," said Aimée, timidly, "that perhaps you would (could you?) see Vincent."

"No, my child. Vincent is not like Isaac. He can not be made wise by experience, and

his folly is scarcely to be distinguished from treachery. I can not see General Vincent."

No choice was allowed, however. Vincent rushed forward, knelt before Toussaint and clasped his knees, imploring, in a convulsion of grief, pardon for the past, and permission to devote every hour of his future life to the family whom he had ruined.

"My pardon you have," said L'Ouverture. "I should rather say my compassion; for you never deliberately designed treachery, I am persuaded."

"I never did! I never did!"

"Neither had you any good design. You have been selfish, vain, and presumptuous; as far from comprehending my purposes as from having criminal ones of your own. In the new circumstances in which negroes are placed, many must fall, however firmly some may stand. You are among the infirm; and therefore, however I may mourn, I do not resent what you have done."

"Thank God! You pardon me! Thank God! Henceforth, with Aimée to watch over me, with you to guide me—"

"No, Vincent! You can not be with me. Aimée is free as she has ever been; but you can not be with me. I go to martyrdom—to fulfill what appears to be the solemn vocation of the Overtures. I go to martyrdom; and none but steady souls must travel that way with me."

"You scorn me," said Vincent, springing from his knees. "Your acts show that you scorn me. You take that poor fellow," pointing to Mars Plaisir, "and you reject me."

"My sons' servant," said Toussaint, smiling. "He goes to his beloved France, free to quit us for any other service when ours becomes too grave for his light spirit. I would not insult you by taking you on a like condition. You must leave us, Vincent," pointing to the *Créole's* boat, now about to put off from the *Héros*. "We will pray for you. Farewell!"

"Aimée," said her lover, scarcely daring to raise his eyes to her face.

"Farewell, Vincent!" Aimée strove to say.

In vain Vincent endeavored to plead. Aimée shook her head, signed to him to go, and hid her face on her father's shoulder. It was too much. Humbled to the point of exasperation, Vincent threw himself over the ship's side into the boat, and never more saw the face of an Overture.

"I have nothing left but you," sobbed Aimée; "but you and my mother. If they kill you, my mother will die, and I shall be desolate."

"Your brothers, my child."

"No, no. I have tried all. I left you to try. I loved you always, but I thought I loved others more. But—"

"But," said her father, when she could not proceed, "you found the lot of woman. To woman the affections are all: to men, even to brothers, they are not. Courage, Aimée!

Courage! for you are an Overture. Courage to meet your woman's martyrdom!"

"Let me rest upon your heart, father, and I can bear any thing."

"Would I could, my child! But they will not allow it—these jailers. They will part us."

"I wish these chains could bind me too—these very links—that I might never leave you," cried Aimée, kissing the fetters which bound her father's arms.

"Your mother's heart, Aimée—that remains."

"I will keep it from breaking, father, trust me."

And the mother and daughter tasted something like happiness, even in an hour like this, in their reunion. It was a strange kind of comfort to Aimée to hear from her mother how long ago her father had foreseen, at Pongaudin, that the day might come when her heart would be torn between her lover and her family. The impending blow had been struck; the struggle had taken place; and it only remained now to endure it.

"Father!" said Génifrède, appealing to Toussaint, with grave countenance, "you say that none but brave and steady souls must go with you on your way to martyrdom. You know me to be cowardly as a slave, and unstable as yonder boat now tossing on the waves. Do you see that boat, father?"

"Surely—yes; it is Paul," said Toussaint, looking through his glass. "Paul is coming to say farewell."

"Let me return with him, father. Let me become his child. I am unworthy to be yours. And he and I are so forlorn!"

Her father's tender gaze encouraged her to say more. Drawing closer, she whispered,

"I have seen Moysé—I have seen him more than once in the morne, and I can not leave this place. Let me stay."

"Stay, my child. Seek consolation in your own way. We will all pray for you; we will all console your mother for your absence. We shall not meet again on earth, Génifrède."

"I know it, father. But the time of rest—how long it is in coming!"

"My child, our rest is in the soul; it lies not either in place or time. Do not look for it in the grave, unless you have it first in the soul."

"Then would I had never been born!"

"How different will be your cry when you have been a daughter to Paul for awhile! When you see him consoled, and reposing upon your care, you will say, 'I thank God that I have lived for this!' A great duty lies before you, my dear child; and in the heart of duty lies rest—a deeper than that of the grave. Shall I give you a duty to discharge for me?"

"Oh yes! I will take it as your blessing."

"Convey to Christophe my last message. Bid him rejoice for me that my work is done. My work is now his. Bid him remember how we always agreed that freedom is safe. I be-

queath the charge of it to him, with my blessing."

"He shall know this, if he lives, before the moon rises."

"If he does not live, let Dessalines hear what was my message to Christophe. He will know how much to take to himself."

It was well that this message was given without further delay. Toussaint was summoned to speak with some officers of Leclere's council in the cabin below. At the clank of his chains upon the deck, all eyes were upon him except those of his own family, which were turned away in grief.

"Before your departure," said one of the officers in the small cabin to which Toussaint was conducted, "we would urge you to do a service to the colony which yet remains in your power. You must not refuse this last service."

"I have never refused to serve the colony; and I am as willing to-day as ever."

"No doubt. Reveal to us, then, the spot in the Mornes du Chaos in which your treasures lie buried, and state their amount."

"I have before said that I have buried no treasures. Do you disbelieve my word?"

"We are sorry to do so, but facts are against you. You can not deceive us. We know that you caused certain of your dependents to bury treasure near the Plateaux de la Ravine; and that you afterward shot these servants to secure your secret."

"Is it possible?"

"You see we have penetrated your counsels. The time for concealment is past. You take your family with you, and none of you will ever return. Your friends are, most of them, disposed of. A new order of things has commenced. You boast of your patriotism. Show it now by giving up the treasure of the colony to the uses of the colony."

"I have already devoted my all to the colony. I reply once more that I leave behind me no treasure but that which you can not appreciate—the grateful hearts of my people."

The investigation was pressed, the inquiry made, under every form of appeal that could be devised, and in vain. Toussaint disdained to repeat his reply, and he spoke no more. The officers left him with threats on their lips. The door was locked and barred behind them, and Toussaint found himself a solitary prisoner.

During the night the vessel got under way. What at that hour were the secrets which lay hid in the mountain passes, the forest shades, and the sad homes of the island whose true ruler was now borne away from its shores?

Pongaudin was already deserted. Monsieur and Madame Pascal had, by great activity, obtained a passage for France in the ship which was freighted with Leclere's boastings of his crowning feat. They were already far on the sea before the *Héros* spread its sails. Leclere's announcement of Toussaint's overthrow was as follows:

"I intercepted letters which he had written to one Fontaine, who was his agent at Cap Français. These afforded an unanswerable proof that he was engaged in a conspiracy, and that he was anxious to regain his former influence in the colony. He waited only for the result of disease among the troops.

"Under these circumstances, it would be improper to give him time to mature his criminal designs. I ordered him to be apprehended—a difficult task; but it succeeded through the excellent arrangements made by General Brunet, who was intrusted with its execution, and the zeal and ardor of Admiral Ferrari.

"I am sending to France, with all his family, this deeply-perfidious man, who by his consummate hypocrisy, has done us so much mischief. The Government will determine how it should dispose of him.

"The apprehension of General Toussaint occasions some disturbances. Two leaders of the insurgents are already in custody, and I have ordered them to be shot. About a hundred of his confidential partisans have been secured, of whom some are on board the *Muiron* frigate, which is under orders for the Mediterranean, and the rest are distributed among the different ships of the squadron.

"I am daily occupied in settling the affairs of the colony with the least possible inconvenience; but the excessive heat, and the diseases which attack us, render it an extremely painful task. I am impatient for the approach of the month of September, when the season will renovate our activity.

"The departure of Toussaint has produced general joy at Cap Français.

"The commissary of justice, Mont Peson, is dead. The colonial prefect, Benezech, is breathing his last. The adjutant-commandant, Dampier, is dead: he was a young officer of great promise.

"I have the honor, etc.,

(Signed)

"LECLERC."

On board the vessel which carried these tidings was Pascal, prepared to give a different version of the late transactions, and revolving with Afra the means by which he might best employ such influence as he had on behalf of his friend. Theirs was a nearly hopeless errand, they well knew; but the less hopeful, the more anxious were they to do what they could.

Was Euphrosyne with them? No. She never forgot the duty which she had set before her—to stay near Le Bosquet, in hopes of better times, when she might make reparation to the people of the estate for what they had suffered at her grandfather's hands. A more pressing duty also detained her on the island. She could be a daughter to M. Raymond in Afra's stead, and thus make their duty easier to the Pascals. Among the lamentations and prayers which went up from the mourning island were those of the old man and the young girl who wept together at Le Zéphyr, scarcely

attempting yet to forgive the enemies whose treachery had outraged the Deliverer—as he was henceforth called, more fondly than ever. They were not wholly wretched. They dwelt on the surprise and pleasure it would be to the Ouvertures to find the Pascals in France before them. Euphrosyne had also the satisfaction of doing something, however indirectly, for her unfortunate friends; and she really enjoyed the occupation, to her so familiar and still so dear, of ministering to the comfort of an old man who had no present dependence but on her.

Her cares and duties were soon increased. The habitations of the Plain du Nord became so disgusting and so dangerous as the pestilence strewed the land with dead, and the survivors of the French army became, in proportion to the visitation, desperate and savage, that Madame Ogé was at length, like all her neighbors, driven from her home. She wished to take refuge with one of her own color; and M. Raymond, at Euphrosyne's suggestion, invited her to Le Zéphyr to await better days. With a good grace did Euphrosyne go out to meet her; with a good grace did she welcome and entertain her. The time was past when she could be terrified with evil prognostications. In the hour of the earthquake, no one heeds the croak of the raven.

Among the nuns at St. Marc there was trembling, which the pale abbess herself could not subdue by reason or exhortation. Their ears were already weary with the moans of the dying. They had now to hear the shrieks and curses of the kidnapped blacks—the friends of L'Ouverture—whose homes were made desolate. The terrified women could not but ask each other, "Who next?" for they all loved L'Ouverture, and had declared their trust in him. No one injured the household of the abbess, however; and the sisters were all spared, in safety and honor, to hear the proclamation of the Independence of Hayti, and to enjoy the protection and friendship of its beloved empress.

And where was she, Thérèse, when St. Marc was resounding with the cries of her husband's betrayed companions and friends? She was on the way to the fastnesses, where her unyielding husband was preparing a tremendous retribution for those whom he had never trusted. She rejoiced, solemnly but mournfully, that he had never yielded. She could not wonder that the first words of Dessalines to her, when he met her horse on the steep, were a command that she would never more intercede for a Frenchman—never more hold back his strong hand from the work which he had now to do. She never did, till that which in a chief was warfare became in an emperor vengeance. Then she resumed her woman's office of intercession, and by it won for herself the title of "the good empress."

The eyes which first caught sight of the receding ship *Héros* at dawn were those of Paul L'Ouverture and Génifrède. They had sent

messengers, more likely than themselves to reach Christophe and Dessalines, with the last message of Toussaint; and they were now at leisure to watch, from the heights above their hut (their home henceforth), the departure of all who bore their name. They were left alone, but not altogether forlorn. They called each other father and daughter; and here they could freely, and forever, mourn Moysse.

Christophe received the message. It was not needed to rouse him to take upon himself, or to share with Dessalines, the office of him who was gone. The thoughts of his heart were told to none. They were unspeakable except by the language of deeds. His deeds proclaimed them; and, after his faithful warfare during his subsequent mild reign, his acts of liberality, wisdom, and mercy showed how true was his understanding of the mission of L'Ouverture.

There were many to share his work to-day. Dessalines was the chief; but leaders sprang up wherever soldiers appeared, asking to be led; and that was everywhere, from the moment of the report of the abduction of Toussaint. Clerveaux revolted from the French, and visited on them the bitterness of his remorse. Maurepas also repented, and was putting his repentance into action when he was seized, tortured, and murdered, with his family. Bellair and his wife conducted with new spirit, from this day, a victorious warfare which was never intermitted, being bequeathed by their barbarous deaths to their exasperated followers.

It was true, as Toussaint knew and felt in his solitary prison on the waters, that the groans which went up from the heights and hollows, the homes and the fastnesses of the island, were such as could not but unite in a fearful war-cry; but it was also true, as he had known and felt during the whole term of his power, that in this war victory could not be doubtful. He had been made the portal of freedom to his race. The passions of men might gather about it, and make a conflict more or less tremendous and protracted; but the way which God had opened, and guarded by awakened human hearts, no multitude of rebellious human hands could close.

CHAPTER XL.

MEETING WINTER.

It was a glorious day, that twelfth of June, when the *Héros* sailed away from the shores of St. Domingo. Before the *Héros* could sail quite away, it was compelled to hover, as it were, about the shadow of the land—to advance and retreat—to say farewell apparently, and then to greet it again. The wind was north-east, so that a direct course was impossible; and the Ouverture family, assembled, with the exception of Toussaint himself, upon deck, gave vent again and again to their tears; again and

again strained their eyes, as the mountains with their shadowy sides, the still forests, the yellow sands, and the quiet settlements of the lateral valleys, came into view or faded away.

L'Ouverture's cabin, to which he was strictly confined during the voyage, had a window in the stern; and he, too, had therefore some change of prospect. He gazed eagerly at every shifting picture of the land, but most eagerly when he found himself off Cap Samana. With his pocket-glass he explored and discovered the very point of rough ground on the height where he stood with Christophe, less than six months before, to watch the approach and observe the rendezvous of the French fleet. He remembered, as his eye was fixed upon the point, his naming to Henri this very ship, in which he was now a prisoner, sailing away, never more to return.

"Be it so!" he thought, according to his wont. "My blacks are not conquered, and will never more be slaves."

The wind soon changed, and the voyage was a rapid one. Short as it was, it was tedious; for, with the exception of Mars Plaisir, who was appointed to wait on him, the prisoner saw no one. Again and again he caught the voices of his children singing upon deck—no doubt in order to communicate with him; but in every instance, almost before he had begun to listen, the song ceased. Mars Plaisir explained that it was silenced by the captain's order. No captain's order had power to stop the prisoner's singing. Every night was Aimée consoled, amidst her weeping, by the solemn air of her father's favorite Latin Hymn to our Lady of the Sea: every morning was Margot roused to hope by her husband's voice, singing his matin prayer. Whatever might be the captain's apprehensions of political danger from these exercises, he gave over the opposition which had succeeded so well with the women.

"My father crossed this sea," thought Toussaint; "and little could he have dreamed that the next of his race would cross it, also a prince and a prisoner. He, the son of a king, was seized and sold as a slave. His son, raised to be a ruler by the hand of Him who creates princes (whether by birth or royalty of soul), is kidnaped, and sacrificed to the passions of a rival. Such is our life! But in its evil there is good. If my father had not crossed the sea as a slave, St. Domingo would have wanted me; and in me, perhaps, its freedom and civilization. If I had not been kidnaped, my blacks might have lacked wrath to accomplish the victory to which I have led them. If my father is looking back on this world, I doubt not he rejoices in the degradation which brought elevation to his race; and as for me, I lay the few years of my old age a ready sacrifice on the altar of Africa."

Sometimes he amused himself with the idea of surveying, at last, the Paris of which he had heard so much. Oftener, however, he dwelt with much complacency on the prospect of

seeing Bonaparte—of meeting his rival, mind to mind. He knew that Bonaparte's curiosity about him was eager, and he never doubted that he should be called personally to account for his government in all its details. He did not consider that the great captain of the age might fear to meet his victim—might shriek from the eye of a brother-soldier whom he had treated worse than a felon.

Time and disappointment taught the prisoner this. None of his dreams was verified. In Brest harbor he was hurried from the ship; allowed a parting embrace of his family upon deck—no more; not a sentence of conversation, though all the ship's crew were by to hear. Mars Plaisir alone was allowed to accompany him. Two hurried whispers alone were conveyed to his ear. Placide assured him (yet how could it be?) that M. Pascal was in France, and would exert himself. And Margot told him, amidst her sobs, that she had done the one only thing she could—she had prayed for Bonaparte, as she promised, that night of prophetic woe, at Ponguadin.

Nothing did he see of Paris but some of the dimly-lighted streets, as he was conveyed at night to the prison of the Temple. During the weeks that he was a prisoner there, he looked in vain for a summons to the presence of the First Consul, or for the First Consul's appearance in his apartment. One of Bonaparte's aids, Caffarelli, came indeed, and brought messages; but these messages were only insulting inquiries about the treasures—the treasures buried in the mornes—forever these treasures! This recurring message, with its answer, was all the communication he had with Bonaparte; and the hum and murmur from the streets were all that he knew of Paris. When Bonaparte, nettled with the reply, "The treasures I have lost are far other than those you seek," was convinced that no better answer would be obtained, he gave the order which had been impending during those weeks of confinement in the Temple.

When Bonaparte found his first leisure, after the fêtes and bustle occasioned in August by his being made First Consul for life, he issued his commands regarding the disposal of his West Indian prisoner: and presently Toussaint was traversing France, with Mars Plaisir for his companion in captivity; with an officer, as a guard, inside the closed carriage; another guard on the box; and one, if not two, mounted in their rear.

The journey was conducted under circumstances of great mystery. The blinds of the carriage were never let down; provisions were served out while the party was in full career; and the few haltings that were made were contrived to take place either in the night or in unfrequented places. It was clear that the complexion of the strangers was not to be seen by the inhabitants. All that Toussaint could learn was that they were traveling south-east.

"Have you mountains in your island?" asked

the officer, letting down the blind just so much, when the carriage turned a corner of the road, as to permit to himself a glimpse of the scenery. "We are entering the Jura. Have you mountains in your island?"

Toussaint left it to Mars Plaisir to answer this question, which he did with indignant volubility, describing the uses and the beauties of the heights of St. Domingo, from the loftiest peaks which intercept the hurricane to the lowest, crested with forts, or spreading their blossoming groves to the verge of the valleys.

"We too have fortresses on our heights," said the officer. "Indeed, you will be in one of them before night. When we are on the other side of Pontarlier, we will look about us a little."

"Then, on the other side of Pontarlier, we shall meet no people," observed Mars Plaisir.

"People! Oh yes! we have people everywhere in France."

When Pontarlier was passed, and the windows of the carriage were thrown open, the travelers perceived plainly enough why this degree of liberty was allowed. The region was so wild that none were likely to come hither in search of the captives. There were inhabitants, but few likely to give information as to who had passed along the road. There were charcoal-burners up on the hill-side; there were women washing clothes in the stream which rushed along, far below in the valley; the miller was in his mill, niched in the hollow beside the water-fall; and there might still be inmates in the convent, which stood just below the firs, on the knoll to the left of the road. But by the way-side there were none who with curious eyes might mark, and with eager tongue report, the complexion of the strangers who were rapidly whirled along toward Jonx.

Toussaint shivered at the chill mountain air blew in. Perhaps what he saw chilled him no less than what he felt. He might have unconsciously expected to see something like the teeming slopes of his own mountains, the yellow ferns, the glittering rocks, shining like polished metal in the sun. Instead of these, the scanty grass was of a blue green; the stunted firs were black; and the patches of dazzling white intermingled with them formed a contrast of color hideous to the eye of a native of the tropics.

"That is snow," exclaimed Mars Plaisir to his master, with the pride of superior experience.

"I know it," replied Toussaint, quietly.

The carriage now labored up a steep ascent. The *brave homme* who drove alighted on one side, and the guard on the other, and walked up the hill to relieve the horses. The guard gathered such flowers as met his eye, and handed into the carriage a blue gentian, which had till now lingered on the borders of the snows, or a rhododendron, for which he had scaled a crag. His officer roughly ordered him not to leave the track.

"If we had passed this way two or three months earlier," he said, complacently, to his prisoners, "we should have found cowslips here and there all along the road. We have a good many cowslips in early summer. Have you cowslips in your island?"

Toussaint smiled as he thought of the flower-strewn savannas, where more blossoms opened and perished in an hour than in this dreary region all the summer through. He heard Mars Plaisir compelled to admit that he had never seen cowslips out of France.

At length, after several mountings and dismountings of the driver and guard, they seemed, on entering a defile, to apply themselves seriously to their business. The guard cast a glance along the road and up the sides of the steeps, and beckoned to the horsemen behind to come on; and the driver repeatedly cracked his whip. Silence settled down on the party within the carriage; for all understood that they drew near the fortress. In silence they wound through the defile, till all egress seemed barred by a lofty crag. The road, however, passed round its base, and disclosed to view a small basin among the mountains, in the midst of which rose the steep which bore the fortress of Joux. At the foot of this steep lay the village—a small assemblage of sordid dwellings. At this village four roads met, from as many defiles which opened into this centre. A mountain stream gushed along, now by the road-side, now winding and growing quieter among the little plot of green fields which lay in the rear of the castle rock. This plot of vivid green cheered for a moment the eye of the captives, but a second glance showed that it was but a swamp. This swamp, crags, firs, and snow, with the dirty village, made up the prospect. As for the inhabitants, as the carriage stopped short of the village, none were to be seen but a girl with her distaff amidst a flock of goats, and some soldiers on the castle walls above.

There appeared to be but one road up the rock—a bridle or foot road to the right, too narrow and too steep for any carriage. Where this joined the main road the carriage stopped, and the prisoners were desired to alight.

"We must trouble you to walk up this hill," said the officer, "unless you prefer to mount, and have your horse led."

Before he had finished speaking, Toussaint was many paces in advance of his guards. But few opportunities had he enjoyed of late of exercising his limbs. He believed that this would be the last; and he sprang up the rocky pathway with a sense of desperate pleasure. Panting and heated, the most active of the soldiers reached the summit some moments after him. Toussaint had made use of those few moments. He had fixed in his memory the leading points of the landscape toward the east—the bearings of the roads which opened glimpses into two valleys on that side—the patches of inclosure—the nooks of pasture where cows were grazing and children were at play; these features of the

landscape he eagerly comprehended, partly for use in case of any opportunity of escape, partly for solace if he should not henceforth be permitted to look abroad.

A few, and but a few more moments he had, while the draw-bridge was lowered, the portcullis was raised, and the guard sent in with some order from his officer. Toussaint well knew that that little plot of fields, with its winding stream, was the last verdure that he might ever see. The snowy summits which peered over the fir-tops were prophets of death to him; for how should he, who had gone hither and thither under the sun of the tropics for sixty years, live chained among the snows? Well did he know this: yet he did not wait to be asked to pass the bridge.

The draw-bridge and the court-yard were both deserted. Not a soldier was to be seen. Mars Plaisir muttered his astonishment; but his master understood that the presence of negro prisoners in this fortress was not to become known. He read in this incident a prophecy of total seclusion.

They were marched rapidly through the court-yard into a dark passage, where they were desired to stop. In a few moments Toussaint heard the tramp of feet about the gate, and understood that the soldiers had been ordered back to their posts.

"The commandant!" the officer announced to his prisoners; and the Commandant Rubant entered the dim passage. Toussaint formed his judgment of him, to a certain extent, in a moment. Rubant endeavored to assume a tone of good-humored familiarity; but there appeared through this a misgiving as to whether he was thus either letting himself down on the one hand, or, on the other, encroaching on the dignity of the person he addressed. His prisoner was a negro; but then he had been the recognized commander-in-chief of St. Domingo. One symptom of awkwardness was, that he addressed Toussaint with no sort of title.

"We have had notice of your approach," said he; "which is fortunate, as it enables me at once to conduct you to your apartment. Will you proceed? This way. A torch, Bellines! We have been looking for you these two days: which happens very well, as we have been enabled to prepare for you. Torches, Bellines! This way. We mount a few steps, you perceive. We are not taking you underground, though I call for lights; but this passage to the left, you perceive, is rather dark. Yes, that is our well; and a great depth it is—deeper, I assure you, than this rock is high. What do they call the depth, Chalôt? Well, never mind the depth! You can follow me, I believe, without waiting for light. We can not go wrong. Through this apartment to the left."

Toussaint, however, chose to wait for Bellines and his torch. He chose to see what he could of the passages of his prison. If this vault in which he stood were not under ground, it

was the dreariest apartment from which the daylight had ever been built out. In the moment's pause occasioned by his not moving on when desired, he heard the dripping of water as in a well.

Bellines appeared, and his torch showed the stone walls of the vault shining with the trickling of water. A cold stream appeared to thicken the air, oppress the lungs, and make the torch burn dim.

"To what apartment can this be the passage?" thought Toussaint. "The grave is warm compared with this."

A glance of wretchedness from Mars Plaisir, seen in the torch-light, as Bellines passed on to the front, showed that the poor fellow's spirits, and perhaps some visions of a merry life among the soldiers, had melted already in the damps of this vault. Rubaut gave him a push, which showed that he was to follow the torch-bearer.

Through this vault was a passage, dark, wet, and slippery. In the left-hand wall of this passage was a door, studded with iron nails, thickly covered with rust. The key was in this door. During the instant required for throwing it wide, a large flake of ice fell from the ceiling of the passage upon the head of Toussaint. He shook it off, and it extinguished the torch.

"You mean to murder us," said he, "if you propose to place us here. Do you not know that ice and darkness are the negro's poison. Snow too," he continued, advancing to the cleft of his dungeon wall, at the outward extremity of which was his small grated window. "Snow piled against this window now! We shall be buried under it in winter."

"You will have good fires in winter."

"In winter! Yes! This night, or I shall never see winter."

"This night! Oh, certainly. You can have a fire, though it is not usual with us at this season. Bellines—a fire here immediately."

He saw his prisoner surveying, by the dim light of the deep window, the miserable cell—about twenty-eight feet by thirteen, built of blocks of stone, its vaulted ceiling so low that it could be touched by the hand; its floor, though planked, rotten and slippery with wet; and no furniture to be seen but a table, two chairs, and two heaps of straw in opposite corners.

"I am happy," said the commandant, "to have been able to avoid putting you underground. The orders I have had, from the First Consul himself, as to your being *mis au secret*, are very strict. Notwithstanding that, I have been able, you see, to place you in an apartment which overlooks the court-yard; and which, too, affords you other objects," pointing through the gratings to the few feet of the pavement without, and the few yards of the perpendicular rock opposite, which might be seen through the loop-hole.

"How many hours of the day and night are we to pass in this place?"

"How many hours? We reckon twenty-

four hours to the day and night, as is the custom in Europe," replied Rubaut; whether in ignorance or irony, his prisoner could not, in the dim twilight, ascertain. He only learned too surely that no exit from this cell was to be allowed.

Fire-wood and light were brought. Rubaut, eager to be busy till he could go, and to be gone as soon as possible, found fault with some long-deceased occupant for having covered its arched ceiling with grotesque drawings in charcoal, and then with Bellines for not having dried the floor. Truly, the light gleamed over it as over a pond. Bellines pleaded in his defense that the floor had been dried twice since morning, but that there was no stopping the melting of the ice above. The water would come through the joints till the winter frosts set in.

"Ay, the winter frosts—they would set all to rights. They will cure the melting of the ice, no doubt." Turning to his prisoners, he congratulated himself on not being compelled to search their persons. The practice of searching was usual, but might, he rejoiced to say, be dispensed with on the present occasion. He might now, therefore, have the pleasure of wishing them a good-evening.

Pointing to the two heaps of straw, he begged that his prisoners would lay down their beds in any part of the cell which pleased them best. Their food, and all that they wanted, would be brought to the door regularly. As for the rest they would wait upon each other. Having thus exhausted his politeness, he quitted the cell; and lock, bolt, and bar were fastened upon the captives.

By the faint light Toussaint then perceived that his companion was struggling with laughter. When Mars Plaisir perceived, by his master's smile, that he had leave to give way, he laughed till the cell rang again, saying,

"Wait upon each other! His excellency wait upon me! His excellency wait upon any body!"

"There should be nothing new in that. I have endeavored to wait upon others all my life. Rarely does Providence grant the favor to wait upon so many."

Mars Plaisir did not comprehend this, and therefore continued,

"These whites think that we blacks are created to be serving—serving always—always serving."

"And they are right. Their mistake is in not seeing that the same is the case with all other men."

In his incessant habit of serving those about him, Toussaint now remembered that it would be more kind to poor Mars Plaisir to employ him than to speak of things which he could not comprehend. He signed to him, therefore, to shake down the straw on each side the fire-place. Mars Plaisir sacrificed some of his own bundle to wipe down the wet walls; but it was all in vain. During the silence,

while his master was meditating at the window, the melancholy sound of falling water—drip, drip—plash, plash—was heard all round, within and without the cell. When he had wiped down the walls, from the door in the corner round to the door again, the place from which he had set out was as wet as ever, and his straw was spoiled. He angrily kicked the wet straw into the fire; the consequence of which was, that the cell was filled with smoke almost to suffocation.

“Ask for more,” said Toussaint.

Mars Plaisir shouted, knocked at the door, and used every endeavor to make himself heard, but in vain. No one came.

“Take some of mine,” said Toussaint. “No one can lie on this floor.”

Mars Plaisir shook his head. He proceeded mournfully to spread the other heap of straw; but a large flake of ice had fallen upon it from the corner of the walls, and it was as wet as that which he had burned.

This was too much for poor Mars Plaisir. He looked upon his master, now spreading his thin hands over the fire, his furrowed face now and then lighted up by the blaze which sprang fitfully through the smoke; he thought of the hall of audience at Port-au-Prince, of the gardens at Pongaudin, of the *Placé d'Armes* at Cap François on review days, of the military journeys and official fêtes of the commander-in-chief, and he looked upon him now. He burst into tears as uncontrollable as his laughter had been before. Feeling his master's hand upon his shoulder, he considered it necessary to give a reason for his grief, and sobbed out,

“They treat your excellency as if your excellency were nobody. They give your excellency no title. They will not even call you general.”

Toussaint laughed at this cause of grief in such a place, but Mars Plaisir insisted upon it.

“How would they like it themselves? What would the First Consul himself say if he were a prisoner, and his jailers refused him his titles?”

“I do not suppose him to be a man of so narrow a heart and so low a soul as that such a trifle could annoy him. Cheer up, if that be all.”

Mars Plaisir was far from thinking this all; but his tears and sobs choked him in the midst of his complaints. Toussaint turned again to the fire, and presently began to sing one of the most familiar songs of St. Domingo. He had not sung a stanza before, as he had anticipated, his servant joined in, rising from his attitude of despair, and singing with as much animation as if he had been on the *Haut-du-Cap*. This was soon put a stop to by a sentinel, who knocked at the door to command silence.

“They can not hear us if we want dry straw,” said Mars Plaisir, passionately; “and yet we can not raise a note but they must stop us.”

“We are caged birds; and you know Denis's canary might sing only when it pleased his

master. Have I not seen even you cover up the cage? But sing—sing softly, and they may not hear you.”

When supper was brought, fresh straw and more fire-wood were granted. At his master's bidding, and under the influence of these comforts, Mars Plaisir composed himself to sleep.

Toussaint sat long beside the fire. He could not have slept. The weeks that had passed since he left St. Domingo had not yet reconciled his ear to the silence of a European night. At sea, the dash of the waves against the ship's side had lulled him to rest. Since he had landed he had slept little, partly from privation of exercise, partly from the action of over-busy thoughts; but also, in part, from the absence of that hum of life which, to the natives of the tropics, is the incentive to sleep and its accompaniment. Here there was but the crackle of the burning wood and the plashing of water, renewed from minute to minute, till it became a fearful doubt—a passing doubt, but very fearful—whether his ear could become accustomed to the dreary sound, or whether his self-command was to be overthrown by so small an agency as this. From such a question he turned, by an effort, to consider other evils of his condition. It was a cruel aggravation of his sufferings to have his servant shut up with him. It imposed upon him some duties, it was true, and was, in so far, a good; but it also imposed most painful restraints. He had a strong persuasion that Bonaparte had not given up the pursuit of his supposed treasures, or the hope of mastering all his designs, real or imaginary; and he suspected that Mars Plaisir would be left long enough with him to receive the overflowings of his confidence (so hard to restrain in such circumstances as theirs!), and would then be tampered with by the agents of the First Consul. What was the nature and efficacy of their system of cross-examination, he knew; and he knew how nothing but ignorance could preserve poor Mars Plaisir from treachery. Here, therefore—here, in this cell, without resource, without companionship, without solace of any kind—it would be necessary, perhaps, through long months, to set a watch upon his lips as strict as when he dined with the French commissaries at Government-house, or when he was weighing the Report of the Central Assembly regarding a Colonial Constitution. For the reserve which his function had imposed upon him at home, he had been repaid by a thousand enjoyments. Now, no more sympathy, no more ministering from his family! No more could he open to Margot his glory in Placide, his hopes from Denis, his cares for his other children, to uphold them under a pressure of influence which were too strong for them; no more could he look upon the friendly face of Henri, and unbosom himself to him in sun or shade; no more could he look upon the results of his labors in the merchant fleets on the sea, and the harvest burdening the plains! No more could happy voices

from a thousand homes come to him in blessing and in joy! No more music, no more sunshine, no more fragrance; no more certainty, either, that others were now enjoying what he had parted with forever! Not only might he never hear what had ensued upon the "truce till August," but he must carefully conceal his anxiety to hear—his belief that there were such tidings to be told. In the presence of Mars Plaisir he could scarcely even think of that which lay heaviest at his heart—of what Henri had done in consequence of his abduction—of his poor oppressed blacks—whether they had sunk under the blow for the time, and so delayed the arrival of that freedom which they must at length achieve; or whether they had risen, like a multitudinous family of bereaved children, to work out the designs of the father who had been snatched from them. Of all this there could be no speech (scarcely a speculation in his secret soul) in the presence of one who must, if he heard, almost necessarily become a traitor. And then his family! From them he had vanished, and he must live as if they had vanished from his very memory. They were, doubtless, all eye, all ear: forever watching to know what had become of him. For their personal safety, now that he was helpless, he trusted there was little cause for fear; but what peace of mind could they enjoy while in ignorance of his fate? He fancied them imploring of their guardians tidings of him in vain; questioning the four winds for whispers of his retreat; pacing every cemetery for a grave that might be his; gazing up at the loopholes of every prison, with a fear that he might be there; keeping awake at midnight, for the chance of a visit from his injured spirit; or seeking sleep in the dim hope that he might be revealed to them in a dream. And all this must be but a dim dream to him, except in such an hour as this—a chance hour when no eye was upon him! The reconciling process was slow, but it was no less sure than usual.

"Be it so!" was, as usual, his conclusion. "Be it so! for as long as Heaven pleases, though that can not be long. The one consolation of being buried alive, soul or body—or both, as in this case—is that release is sure and near. This poor fellow's spirit will die within him, and his body will then be let out—the consummation most necessary for him. And my body, already failing, will soon die, and my work be done. To die, and to die thus, is part of my work; and I will do it as willingly as in the field. Hundreds, thousands of my race have died for slavery, cooped up, pining, suffocated in slave-ships in the wastes of the sea. Hundreds and thousands have thus died, without knowing the end for which they perished. What is it, then, for one to die of cold in the wastes of the mountains for freedom, and knowing that freedom is the end of his life and his death? What is it? If I groan, if I shrink, may my race curse me, and my God cast me out!"

A warmer glow than the dying embers could give passed through his frame; and he presently slept, basking till morning in dreams of his sunny home.

 CHAPTER XLI.

HALF FREE.

AUTUMN faded, and the long winter of the Jura came on, without bringing changes of any importance to the prisoners, unless it were that, in addition to the wood fire which scarcely kept up the warmth of life in their bodies, they were allowed a stove. This indulgence was not in answer to any request of theirs. Toussaint early discovered that Rubant would grant nothing that was asked for, but liked to bestow a favor spontaneously now and then. This was a clear piece of instruction, by which, however, Mars Plaisir was slow to profit. Notwithstanding his master's explanations and commands, and his own promises, fervently given when they were alone, he could never see the commandant without pouring out all his complaints, and asking for every thing relating to external comfort that his master had been accustomed to at Pongaudin. A stove not being among the articles of furniture there, was not asked for; and thus this one comfort was not intercepted by being named. Books were another. Mars Plaisir had been taught to read and write in one of the public schools in the island; but his tastes did not lie in the direction of literature, and he rarely remembered that he possessed the accomplishment of being able to read, except when circumstances called upon him to boast of his country and his race. Books were therefore brought, two at a time, with the commandant's compliments; two at a time, for the rule of treating the prisoners as equals was exactly observed. This civility brought great comfort to Toussaint—the greatest except solitude. He always chose to suppose that Mars Plaisir was reading when he held a book; and he put a book into his hands daily when he opened his own. Many an hour did he thus obtain for the indulgence of his meditations; and while his servant was wondering how he could see to read by the dim light which came in at the window—more dim each day, as the snow-heap there rose higher—or by the fitful flame of the fire, his thoughts were far away, beating about amidst the struggle then probably going on in St. Domingo; or exploring, with wonder and sorrow, the narrow and darkened passages of that mind which he had long taken to be the companion of his own; or springing forward into the future, and reposing in serene faith on the condition of his people when at length they should possess their own souls and have learned to use their human privileges. Many a time did Mars Plaisir, looking off from a volume of the "Philosophical Dictionary," which yielded no amusement

to him, watch the bright smile on his master's face, and suppose it owing to the jokes in the Racine he held, when that smile arose from pictures formed within of the future senates, schools, courts, and virtuous homes in which his dusky brethren would hereafter be exercising and securing their rights. Not ungratefully did he use his books the while. He read and enjoyed; but his greatest obligations to them were for the suggestions they afforded, the guidance they offered to his thoughts to regions amidst which his prison and its sufferings were forgotten.

At times, the servant so far broke through his habitual deference for his master as to fling down his book upon the table, and then beg pardon, saying that they should both go mad if they did not make some noise. When he saw the snow falling perpetually, noiseless as the dew, he longed for the sheeted rains of his own winter, splashing as if to drown the land. Here there were only the eternal drip, drip, which his ear was weary of months ago.

"Can not you fancy it rain-drops falling from a palm-leaf? Shut your eyes and try," said his master.

It would not do. Mars Plaisir complained that the commandant had promised that this drip should cease when the frost of winter came.

"So it might but for our stove. But then our ears would have been frozen up too. We should have been under-ground by this time—which they say we are not now, though it is hard sometimes to believe them. However, we shall hear something by-and-by that will drown the drip. Among these mountains there must be thunder. In the summer, Mars Plaisir, we may hear thunder."

"In the summer!" exclaimed Mars Plaisir, covering his face with his hands.

"That is, not you, but I. I hope they will let you out long before the summer."

"Does your excellency hope so?" cried Mars Plaisir, springing to his feet.

"Certainly, my poor fellow. The happiest news I expect ever to hear is that you are to be released; and this news I do expect to hear. They will not let you go home, to tell where I am, but they will take you out of this place."

"Oh, your excellency! if you think so, would your excellency be pleased to speak for me—to ask the commandant to let me out? If you will tell him that my rheumatism will not let me sleep—I do not want to go home—I do not want to leave your excellency except for your excellency's good. I would say all I could for you, and kneel to the First Consul; and, if they would not set you free, I would—" Here his voice faltered, but he spoke the words, "I would come back into your excellency's service in the summer, when I had got cured of my rheumatism. If you would speak a word to the commandant!"

"I would, if I were not sure of injuring you by doing so. Do you not see that nothing is

to be granted us that we ask for? Speak not another word of liberty, and you may have it. Ask for it, and you are here for life—or for my life. Remember!"

Mars Plaisir stood deep in thought.

"You have never asked for your liberty?" said his master. "No. I knew that, for my sake, you had not. Has no one ever mentioned liberty to you? I understand," he continued, seeing an expression of confusion in the poor fellow's face. "Do not tell me any thing, only hear me. If freedom should be offered to you, take it. It is my wish—it is my command. Is there more wood? None but this?"

"None but this damp wood that chokes us with smoke. They send us the worst wood—the green, damp wood that the poorest of the whites in the castle will not use," cried Mars Plaisir, striving to work off his emotions in a fit of passion. He kicked the unpromising log into the fire-place as he exclaimed,

"They think the worst of every thing good enough for us, because we are blacks. Oh! oh!" Here his wrath was aggravated by a twinge of rheumatism. "They think any thing good enough for blacks."

"Let them think so," said his master, kindly. "God does not. God did not think so when he gave us the soil of Africa and the sun of St. Domingo. When he planted the gardens of the world with palms, it was for the blacks. When he spread the wide shade of the banyan, he made a tent for the blacks. When he filled the air with the scent of the cinnamon and the cacao, was it not for the blacks to enjoy the fragrance? Has he not given them music? Has he not given them love and a home? What has he not given them? Let the whites think of us as they will! They shall be welcome to a share of what God gave the blacks, though they return us nothing better than wet wood to warm us among their snows."

"It is true," said Mars Plaisir, his complacency completely restored; "God thinks nothing too good for the blacks. I will tell the First Consul so if—"

"The First Consul would rather hear something else from you: and you know, Mars Plaisir, the whites laugh at us for our boastings. However, tell the First Consul what you will."

Again was Mars Plaisir silenced and his countenance confused. Perpetually, from this hour, did he drop words which showed an expectation of seeing the First Consul—words which were never noticed by his master. Every time that the increasing weakness and pain under which Toussaint suffered forced themselves on his servant's observation; whenever the skeleton hands were rubbed in his own, to relieve cramps and restore warmth; or the friendly office was returned, in spite of the shame and confusion of the servant at finding himself thus served; with every drift of snow which blocked up the window, and every relaxation of frost, which only increased the worse

evil of the damp, Mars Plaisir avowed or muttered the persuasive things he would say to the First Consul.

Toussaint felt too much sympathy to indulge in much contempt for his companion. He too found it hard to be tortured with cramps and wrung by spasms—to enjoy no respite from vexations of body and spirit. He too found the passage to the grave weary and dreary. And as for an interview with Bonaparte, for how long had this been his first desire! How distinctly had it of late been the reserve of his hope! Reminding himself, too, of the effects on the wretched of an indefinite hope, such as the unsettled mind and manners of his servant convinced him, more and more, had been held out, he could not, in the very midst of scenes of increasing folly and passion, despise poor Mars Plaisir. He mistrusted him, however; and with a more irksome mistrust continually, while he became aware that Mars Plaisir was in the habit of lamenting St. Domingo chiefly for the sake of naming Christophe and Dessalines, the companies in the mornes, the fever among the whites, and whatever might be most likely to draw his master into conversation on the hopes and resources of the blacks. He became more and more convinced that the weakness of his companion was practiced upon, and possibly his attachment to his master, by promises of good to both, on condition of information furnished. He was nearly certain that he had once heard the door of the cell closed gently as he was beginning to awake in the middle of the night; and he was quite sure that he one day saw Mars Plaisir burn a note as he replenished the fire, while he thought his master was busy reading. Not even these mysterious proceedings could make Toussaint feel any thing worse than sorrowing pity for Mars Plaisir.

The commandant had ceased to visit his prisoners. During the rest of the winter he never came. He sent books occasionally, but less frequently. The supply of fire-wood was gradually diminished, and so was the quantity of food. The ailments of the prisoners were aggravated from day to day; and if the commandant had favored them with his presence, he would have believed that he saw two dusky shadows amidst the gloom of their cell rather than men.

One morning Toussaint awoke, slowly and with difficulty, from a sleep which appeared to have been strangely sound for one who could not move a limb without pain, and who rarely, therefore, slept for many minutes together. It must have been strangely long, too; for the light was as strong as it had ever been at noon in this dim cell. Before he rose, Toussaint felt that there was sunshine in the air; and the thought that spring was come sent a gleam of pleasure through his spirit. It was true enough. As he stood before the window, something like a shadow might be seen on the floor. No sky—not a shred the breadth of his hand—was to be

seen. For six months past he had beheld neither cloud, nor star, nor the flight of a bird. But, casting a glance up to the perpendicular rock opposite, he saw that it faintly reflected sunshine. He saw, moreover, something white moving—some living creature upon this rock. It was a young kid, standing upon a point or ledge imperceptible below; by its action, browsing upon some vegetation which could not be seen so far off.

“Mars Plaisir! Mars Plaisir!” cried Toussaint. “Spring is come! This world is alive again, even here. Mars Plaisir!”

There was no answer.

“He has slept deeply and long, like myself,” said he, going, however, into the darker corner of the cell where Mars Plaisir’s bed was laid. The straw was there, but no one was on it. The stove was warm, but there was no fire in the fire-place. The small chest allowed for the prisoners’ clothes was gone; every thing was gone but the two volumes which they had been reading the night before. Toussaint shook these books to see if any note had been hidden in them. He explored them at the window to discover any word of farewell that might be written on blank-leaf or margin. There was none there; nor any scrap of paper hidden in the straw or dropped upon the floor. Mars Plaisir was gone, and had left no token.

“They drugged me—hence my long sleep,” thought Toussaint. “They knew the poor fellow’s weakness, and feared his saying too much when it came to parting. I hope they will treat him well, for (thanks to my care for him!) he never betrayed them to me. I treated him well in taking care that he should not betray me to them, while they yet so far believed that he might as to release him. It is all well: and I am alone! It is almost like being in the free air. I am almost as free as yonder kid on the rock. My wife, my children! I may name you all now—name you in my thoughts and in my song. Placide! are you rousing the nations to ask the tyrant where I am? Henri! have you buried the dead whites yet in St. Domingo? and have your rains done weeping the treason of those dead against freedom? Let it be so, Henri! Your rains have washed out the blood of this treason; and your dews have brought forth the verdure of your plains, to cover the graves of the guilty and the fallen. Take this lesson home, Henri! Forget—not me, for you must remember me in carrying on my work—but forget how you lost me. Believe that I fell in the mornes, and that you buried me there; believe this rather than shed one drop of blood for me. Learn of God, not of Bonaparte, how to bless our race. Poison their souls no more with blood! The sword and the fever have done their work, and tamed your tyrants. As for the rest, act with God for our people! Give them harvests to their hands, and open the universe of knowledge before their eyes. Give them rest and stillness in the summer heats, and shelter them in vir-

tinuous and busy homes from the sheeted rains. It is enough that blood was the price of freedom—a heavy price which has been paid. Let there be no such barter for vengeance! My children, hear me! Wherever you are, in the court of our tyrant, or on the wide sea, or on the mountain top, where the very storms can not make themselves heard so high, yet let your father's voice reach you from his living grave! No vengeance! Freedom, freedom to the last drop of blood in the veins of our race! Let our island be left to the wild herds and the reptiles rather than be the habitation of slaves: but, if you have established freedom there, it is holy ground, and no vengeance must profane it. If you love me and my race, you must forgive my murderers. Yes, murderers!" he pursued in thought, after dwelling a while on the images of home and familiar faces; "murderers they already are, doubtless, in intent. I should have been sent hence long ago but for the hope of reaching my counsels through Mars Plaisir. From the eyes of the world I have already disappeared, and nothing hinders the riddance of me now. Feeble as I am, the waiting for death may yet be tedious. If tedious for him who has this day done with me, how tedious for me, who have done with him and with all the world! done with them, except as to the affections with which one may look back upon them from the clear heights on the other side of the dark valley. That I should pine and shiver long in the shadows of that valley would be tedious to him who drove me there before my time, and to me! He has never submitted to what is tedious, and he will not now."

The door of the cell was here softly opened; a head showed itself, and immediately disappeared. Toussaint silently watched the kid, as it moved from point to point on the face of the rock; and it was with some sorrow that he at last saw it spring away. Just then, Bellines entered with the usual miserable breakfast. Toussaint requested fire, to which Bellines assented. He then asked to have the window opened, that the air of the spring morning might enter. Bellines shrugged his shoulders, and observed that the air of these March mornings was sharp. The prisoner persisted, however; and with the fresh air there came in upon him a fresh set of thoughts. Calling Bellines back, he desired, in a tone of authority, to see the commandant.

It was strange to him; he wondered at himself on finding his mind filled with a new enterprise—with the idea of making a last appeal to Rabaut for freedom—an appeal to his justice, not to his clemency. With the chill breeze there had entered the tinkle of the cow-bell and the voices of children singing. These called up a vivid picture of the valley, as he had seen it on entering his prison—the small green level, the gushing stream, the sunny rock, the girl with her distaff, tending the goats. He thought he could show his title to, at least, a free sight

of the face of nature; and the impulse did not immediately die. During the morning he listened for footsteps without. After some hours he smiled at his own hope, and nearly ceased to listen. The face of the rock grew dim; the wind rose, and sleet was driven in at the window; so that he was compelled to use his stiff and aching limbs in climbing up to shut it. No one had remembered or had chosen to make his fire; and he was shivering, as in an ague-fit, when, late in the afternoon, Bellines brought in his second meal and some fuel.

"The commandant!"

"The commandant is not in the castle. He is absent to-day."

"Where?"

"They say the First Consul has business with him."

"With me rather," thought Toussaint. He said aloud, "Then he is gone with my servant."

"May be so. They went the same road; but that road leads to many places."

"The road from Pontarlier?"

"Any road—all our roads here lead to many places," said Bellines, as he went out.

"Poor Mars Plaisir?" thought Toussaint, as he carefully placed the wood so as to tempt the feeble blaze. "Our road has seemed the same for the last eight months, but it leads to widely different points. I rejoice for him that his has parted off to-day; and for myself, though it shows that I am near the end of mine. Is it this soldier, with his comrades, who is to end me? Or is it this supper, better drugged than that of last night? Or will they wait to see whether solitude will kill a busy, ambitious commander-in-chief, as they think me?"

CHAPTER XLII.

FREE.

DAY after day passed on, and the prisoner found no change in his condition—as far, at least, as it depended on his jailers. He was more ill as he became enveloped in the damps of the spring; and he grew more and more sensible of the comfort of being alone. Death by violence, however, did not come.

He did not give over his concern for Mars Plaisir because he was glad of his absence. He inquired occasionally for the commandant, hoping that, if he could see Rabaut, he might learn whether his servant was still a prisoner, and whether his release from this cell had been for freedom, or for a worse lot than he had left behind. There was no learning from Bellines, however, whether the commandant had returned to the fortress, or who was lieutenant if he had not. In the middle of April, the doubt was settled by the appearance of Rabaut himself in the cell. He was civil—unusually so—but declared himself unable to give any information about Mars Plaisir. He had nothing

more to do with his prisoners when they were once taken out of his charge. He had always business enough upon his hands to prevent his occupying himself with things and people that were gone by. He had delivered Mars Plaisir into proper care, and that was the last he knew of him. The man was well at that time—as well as usual, and pleased enough to be in the open air again. Rabaut could remember no more concerning him; in fact, had not thought of him again, from that day to the present.

“And this is the kind of answer that you would give concerning me, if my sons should arrive hither in search of me some days after my grave had been closed?”

“Come, come! no foreboding!” said Rabaut. “Foreboding is bad.”

“If my sons should present themselves—” proceeded Toussaint.

“They will not come here—they can not come here,” interrupted Rabaut. “No one knows that you are here but some three or four who will never tell.”

“How!” thought Toussaint; “have they secured Mars Plaisir, that he shall never tell?” For the poor man’s sake, however, he would not ask this aloud.

Rabaut continued: “The reason why we can not have the pleasure of giving you the range of the fortress is, that the First Consul thinks it necessary to keep secret the place of your abode—for the good of the colony, as he says. With one of our own countrymen this seclusion might not be necessary, as the good people of the village could hardly distinguish features from the distance at which they are; and they have no telescopes—no idea of playing the spy upon us, as we can upon them. They can not distinguish features so high up—”

“But they could complexion.”

“Exactly so; and it might get abroad that some one of your color was here.”

“And if it should get abroad, and some one of my sons or my wife should come, your answer would be that you remember nothing—that you can not charge your memory with persons and things that are gone by—that you have had prisoners of all complexions—that some have lived and some have died—and that you have something else to do than to remember what became of each. I hope, however, and (as it would be for the advantage of the First Consul) I believe, that you would have the complaisance to show them my grave.”

“Come, come! no foreboding! Foreboding is bad,” repeated Rabaut.

Toussaint smiled, and said,

“What other employment do you afford me than that of looking into the past and future, in order to avoid the present? If, turning from the sickening view which the past presents of the treachery of your race to mine, of the abuse of my brotherly trust in him by which your ruler has afflicted our hearts—if, turning from this mournful past, I look the other way, what do I see before me but the open grave?”

“You are out of spirits,” said Rabaut, building up the fire. “You wear well, however. You must have been very strong in your best days. You wear extremely well.”

“I still live; and that I do so is because the sun of my own climate, and the strength of soul of my best days, shine and glow through me now, quenching in part even these damps. But I am old, and every day heaps years on me. However, I am as willing as you that my looking forward should be for others than myself. I might be able to forebode for France and for its ruler.”

Rabaut folded his arms, and leaned, as if anxious to listen, against the wall beside the fire; but it was so wet that he quickly shifted his position—still, however, keeping his eyes fixed on his prisoner.

“And what would you forebode for France and for her ruler?” he asked.

“That my country will never again be hers. Her retribution is as sure as her tyranny has been great. She may send out fleet after fleet, each bearing an army; but the spirit of freedom will be too strong for them all. Their bodies will poison the air and choke the sea, and the names of their commanders will, one after another, sink in disgrace before they will again make slaves of my people in St. Domingo. How stands the name of Leclerc at this moment in France?”

“Leclerc is dead,” said Rabaut; repenting, the next moment, that he had said so much. Toussaint saw this by his countenance, and inquired no further.

“He is dead! and twenty thousand Frenchmen with him, who might at this hour have been enjoying at home the natural wealth of my country, the fruits of our industry. The time was when I thought your ruler and I—the ruler, in alliance with him, of my race in St. Domingo—were brothers in soul, as we were apparently in duty and in fortune. Brothers in soul we were not, as it has been the heaviest grief of my life to learn. I spurn brotherhood of soul with one whose ambition has been for himself. Brothers in duty we were; and, if we should yet be brothers in fortune—if he should fall into the hands of a strong foe— But you are saying in your heart, ‘No foreboding! Foreboding is bad.’”

Rabaut smiled, and said foreboding was only bad for the spirits; and the First Consul’s spirits were not likely to be affected by any thing that could be said at Joux. To predict bad fortune to him was like looking for the sun to be put out at noonday; it might pass the time, but would not dim the sun.

“So was it said of me,” replied the prisoner; “and with the more reason, because I made no enemies. My enemies have not been of my own making. Your ruler is making enemies on every hand; and alas! for him if he lives to meet the hour of retribution! If he, like myself, should fall into the power of a strong foe—if he should pass his remaining days im-

prisoned on a rock, may he find more peace than I should dare look for if I had his soul!"

"There is not a braver man in Europe, or the Indies either, than the First Consul."

"Brave toward foes without and sufferings to come. But bravery gives no help against enemies harbored within and evils fixed in the past. What will his bravery avail against the images of France corrupted, of Europe outraged, of the blacks betrayed and oppressed—of the godlike power which was put into his hands, abused to the purposes of the devil!"

"But perhaps he would not view his affairs as you do."

"Then would his bravery avail him no better. If he should be so blind as to see nothing higher and better than his own acts, then will he see no higher nor better hope than he has lost. Then will he suffer and die under the slow torments of personal mortifications and regrets."

"You say you are sinking under your reverses. You say you are slowly dying."

"I am. I shall die of the sickening and pining of sense and limb—of the wasting of bone and muscle. Day by day is my eye more dim, and my right arm more feeble. But I have never complained of evils that the bravery you speak of would not meet. Have I ever said that you have touched my soul?"

Rubaut saw the fire in his eye, glanced at his emaciated hand, and felt that this was true. He could bear the conversation no longer, now that no disclosures that could serve the First Consul seemed likely to be made.

"You are going?" said Toussaint.

"Yes, I looked in to-day, because I am about to leave the fortress for a few days."

"If you see the First Consul, tell him what I have now said; and add that if, like him, I had used my power for myself, he would have had a power over me which he has not now. I should not then have been here—(nay, you must hear me)—I should not then have been here, crushed beneath his hand; I should have been on the throne of St. Domingo—flattered, as he is, by assurances of my glory and security, but crushed by a heavier weight than that of his hand—by his image, as that of one betrayed in my infidelity to his country and nation. Tell him this; tell him that I perish willingly, if this consequence of my fidelity to France may be a plea for justice to my race."

"How people have misrepresented you to me!" said Rubaut, bustling about the cell, and opening the door to call Bellines. "They told me you were very silent—rarely spoke."

"That was true when my duty was to think," said Toussaint. "To-day my duty has been to speak. Remember that yours, in fidelity to your ruler, is to repeat to him what I say."

"More wood, Bellines," said Rubaut, going to the door to give further direction in a low voice. Returning, he said, with some hurry of manner, that, as he was to be absent for two or three days, he had sent for such a supply of

wood and flambeaux as might last some time. More books should also be brought.

"When shall we meet again?" asked Toussaint.

"I don't know. Indeed I do not know," said the commandant, looking at his watch by the fire-light. His prisoner saw that his hands trembled, and that he walked with some irresolution to the door.

"Au revoir!" said Toussaint.

Rubaut did not reply, but went out, leaving the door standing wide, and apparently no one to guard it.

Toussaint's heart beat at the thought that this might give him one more opportunity of being abroad in the daylight—perhaps in the sun! He rose to make the attempt; but he was exhausted by the conversation he had held—the first for so long! His aching limbs failed him, and he sank down on his bed, from which he did not rise till long after Bellines had laid down his loads and left the place.

The prisoner rose at length, to walk, as he did many times in the day, from corner to corner of his cell. At the first turn, by the door, he struck his foot against something, which he upset. It was a pitcher of water, which, with a loaf of bread, had been put in that unusual place. The sight was as distinct in its signification as a yawning grave. His door was to open upon him no more. He was not again to see a human face. The commandant was to be absent a while, and, on returning, to find his prisoner dead.

He used all means that he could devise to ascertain whether it were indeed so. He called Bellines from the door in the way which Bellines had never failed to reply to since the departure of Mars Plaisir. Bellines did not come. He sang aloud, as he had never before been allowed to sing, unchecked, since he entered the fortress. He now sang unchecked. The hour of the afternoon meal passed, and no one came. The evening closed, and no bolt had been drawn. The case was clear.

The prisoner now and then felt a moment's surprise at experiencing so little recoil from such a fate. He was scarcely conscious even of repugnance. His tranquillity was doubtless owing, in part, to his having long contemplated death in this place as certain; to life having now little left to make its continuance desirable; and to his knowing himself to be so reduced that the struggle could not be very long. But he himself believed his composure to be owing to another cause than any of these.

"He who appointed me to the work of such a life as mine," thought the dying man, "is making its close easy to his servant. I would willingly have suffered to the extremity of his will: but my work is done; men's eyes are no longer upon me; I am alone with Him; and He is pleased to let me enter already upon my everlasting peace. If Father Laxabon were here, would he now say, as he has often said, and as most men say, that, looking back upon

life from its close, it appears short as the time of the early rains? Instead of this, how long appear the sixty years that I have lived! How long, how weary now seems the life when I was a slave—though much was done, and it was the schooling of my soul for the work preparing for my hand! My Margot! my children! how quietly did we then live, as if no change were ever to come, and we were to sit before our door at Breda every evening till death should remove us one by one! While I was composing my soul to patience by thought and by reading, how little did I dream that I was so becoming prepared to free my race—to reign, and then to die of cold and hunger, such as the meanest slave never knows! Then the next eight years of toil—they seem longer than all that went before. Doubtless they were lengthened to me, to make my weak powers equal to the greatness of my task; for every day of conducting war and making laws appeared to me stretched out into a year. These late seasons of reverse have passed over more rapidly, for their suffering has been less. While all, even to Henri, have pitied me during these latter years, they knew not that I was recovering the peace which I shall now no more lose. It is true that I erred, according to the common estimate of affairs, in not making myself a king, and separating my country from France, as France herself is compelling her to separate at last. It is true I might now have been reigning there instead of dying here; and, what is more worthy of meditation, my people might now have been laying aside their arms, and beginning a long career of peace. It might possibly have been so—but at what cost! Their career of freedom (if freedom it could then have been called) would have begun in treason and in murder, and the stain would have polluted my race forever. Now they will have freedom still; they can not but have it, though it is delayed. And upon this freedom will rest the blessing of Heaven. We have not fought for dominion nor for plunder; nor, as far as I could govern the passions of men, for revenge. We began our career of freedom in fidelity, in obedience, and in reverence toward the whites; and therefore may we take to ourselves the blessing of Him who made us to be free, and demands that we be so with clean hands and a pure heart. Therefore will the freedom of St. Domingo be but the beginning of freedom to the negro race. Therefore may we hope that in this race will the spirit of Christianity appear more fully than it has yet shown itself among the proud whites; show itself in its gentleness, its fidelity, its disinterestedness, and its simple trust. The proud whites may scorn this hope, and point to the ignorance and the passions of my people, and say, 'Is this your exhibition of the spirit of the Gospel?' But not for this will we give up our hope. This ignorance, these passions, are natural to all men, and are to us aggravated and protracted by our slavery. Remove them by the discipline and the stimulus

of freedom, begun in obedience to God and fidelity to men, and there remain the love that embraces all; the meek faith that can bear to be betrayed, but is ashamed to doubt; the generosity that can forgive offenses seventy-and-seven times renewed; the simple, open, joyous spirit, which marks such as are of the kingdom of Heaven. Lord! I thank thee that thou hast made me the servant of this race!"

Never, during the years of his loneliness or the days of his grandeur, had Toussaint spent a brighter hour than now, while the spirit of prophecy (twin-angel with death) visited him, and showed him the realms of mind which were opening before his race—that countless host whose van he had himself led to the confines. This spirit whispered something of the immortality of his own name, hidden, lost as he was in his last hours.

"Be it so!" thought he, "if my name can excite any to devotedness, or give to any the pleasure of being grateful. If my name live, the goodness of those who name it will be its life; for my true self will not be in it. No one will more know the real Toussaint. The weakness that was in me when I felt most strong, the reluctance when I appeared most ready, the acts of sin from which I was saved by accident alone, the divine constraint of circumstances to which my best deeds were owing—these things are between me and my God. If my name and my life are to be of use, I thank God that they exist: but this outward existence of them is nothing between him and me. To me henceforward they no more belong than the name of Epaminondas or the life of Tell. Man stands naked on the brink of the grave, his name stripped from him, and his deeds laid down as the property of the society he leaves behind. Let the name and deeds I now leave behind be a pride to generations yet to come—a more innocent pride than they have sometimes, alas! been to me. I have done with them."

Toussaint has often known what hunger was: in the mornes he had endured it almost to extremity. He now expected to suffer less from it than then, from being able to yield to the faintness and drowsiness which had then to be resisted. From time to time, during his meditations, he felt its sensations visiting him, and felt them without fear or regret. He had eaten his loaf when first hungry, and had watched through the first night, hoping to sleep his long sleep the sooner when his fire should at length be burned out. During the day, some faint sounds reached him from the valley—some tokens of the existence of men. During the last two nights of his life, his ear was kept awake only by the dropping of water—the old familiar sound—and the occasional stir of the brands upon the hearth. About midnight of the second night he found he could sit up no longer. With trembling hands he laid on such pieces of wood as he could lift, lighted another flambeau, and lay down on his straw. He raised himself but once—hastily and dizzily in the dawn (dawn

to him, but sunrise abroad). His ear had been reached by the song of the young goat-herds as they led their flocks abroad into another valley. The prisoner had dreamed that it was his boy Denis, singing in the piazza at Pongaudin. As his dim eye recognized the place by the flicker of the expiring flambeau, he smiled at his delusion, and sank back to sleep again.

The commandant was absent three days. On his return he summoned Bellines, and said, in the presence of several soldiers,

"How is the prisoner there?" pointing in the direction of Toussaint's cell.

"He has been very quiet this morning, sir."

"Very quiet? Do you suppose he is ill?"

"He was as well as usual the last time I went to him."

"He has had plenty of every thing, I suppose?"

"Oh yes, sir. Wood, candle, food, water—every thing."

"Very well. Get lights, and I will visit him."

Lights were brought. A boy who carried a lantern shivered as he saw how ghastly Bellines's face looked in the yellow gleam, in the dark vault on the way to the cell, and was not sorry to be told to stay behind till called to light the commandant back again.

"Have you heard any thing?" asked Rubaut of the soldier, in a low voice.

"Not for many hours. There was a call or two, and some singing, just after you went, but nothing since."

"Hush! Listen!"

They listened motionless for some time; but nothing was heard but the everlasting plash which went on all around them.

"Unbar the door, Bellines."

He did so, and held the door wide for the commandant to enter. Rubaut stalked in, and straight up to the straw bed. He called the prisoner in a somewhat agitated voice, felt the hand, raised the head, and declared that he was

gone. The candle was burned completely out. Rubaut turned to the hearth, carefully stirred the ashes, blew among them, and raised a spark.

"You observe," he said to Bellines, "his fire was burning when we found him."

"Yes, sir."

"There is more wood and more candle?"

"Yes, sir; the wood is in the corner, and the candle on the table—just under your hand, sir."

"Oh, ay—here. Put on some wood and blow up a flame. Observe, we found his fire burning."

"Yes, sir."

They soon re-appeared in the court-yard and announced the death of the prisoner. Rubaut ordered a messenger to be in readiness to ride to Pontarlier by the time he should have written a letter.

"We must have the physicians from Pontarlier," observed the commandant aloud, "to examine the deceased, and declare what he died of. The old man has not been well for some time past. I have no doubt the physicians will find that he died of apoplexy, or something of the kind."

"No wonder, poor soul!" said a sutler's wife to another woman.

"No wonder, indeed," replied the other. "My husband died of the heat in St. Domingo; and they took this poor man—(don't tell it, but he was a black; I got a sight of him, and he came from St. Domingo, you may depend upon it)—they took him out of all that heat, and put him into that cold, damp place there! No wonder he is dead."

"Well, I never knew we had a black here!"

"Don't say I told you, then."

"I have no doubt—yes, we found his fire burning," said Bellines to the inquirers around him. "They will find it apoplexy, or some such thing, I have no doubt of it."

And so they did, to the entire satisfaction of the First Consul.

Yet it was long before the inquiring world knew with certainty what had become of Toussaint L'Ouverture.

APPENDIX.

THOSE who feel interest enough in the extraordinary fortunes of Toussaint L'Ouverture to inquire concerning him from the Biographical Dictionaries and Popular Histories of the day, will find in them all the same brief and peremptory decision concerning his character. They all pronounce him to have been a man of wonderful sagacity, endowed with a native genius for both war and government; but savage in warfare, hypocritical in religion—using piety as a political mask, and, in all his affairs, the very prince of dissemblers. It is true that this account consists neither with the facts of his life, the opinions of the people he delivered, nor the state documents of the island he governed. Yet it is easy to account for. The first notices of him were French, reported by the discomfited invaders of St. Domingo to writers imbued with the philosophy of the days of the Revolution; and later accounts are copies of these earlier ones. From the time when my attention was first fixed on this hero, I have been struck with the inconsistencies contained in all reports of his character which ascribe to him cruelty and hypocrisy; and, after a long and careful comparison of such views with his words and deeds, with the evidence obtainable from St. Domingo, and with the temper of his times in France, I have arrived at the conclusion that his character was, in sober truth, such as I have endeavored to represent it in the foregoing work.

I do not mean to say that I am the first who has formed an opinion that Toussaint was an honest, a religious, and a mild and merciful man. In an article in the *Quarterly Review* (No. XLII.) on the "Past and Present State of Hayti," so interesting an account is given of the great negro as to cause some wonder that no one has, till now, been moved by it to present the facts of his life in the form of an historical novel. In that article it is justly observed that the *onus* rests with those who accuse Toussaint of hypocrisy to prove their allegation by facts. I would say the same of the other charge of cruelty. Meantime, I disbelieve both charges, for these reasons among others.

The wars of St. Domingo were conducted in a most barbarous spirit before the time of Toussaint's acquisition of power and after his abduction. During the interval, the whole weight of his influence was given to curb the ferocity of both parties. He pardoned his personal enemies (as in the instance of the mulattoes in the Church); and he punished in his followers, as the most unpardonable offense they could commit, any infringement of his rule of "NO RETALIATION." When it is considered that the cruelties perpetrated in the rising of 1791, and renewed after the fall of Toussaint, were invented by the whites, and copied by the negroes (who were wont to imitate their masters in all they did), it is no small evidence of L'Ouverture's magnanimity that he conceived, illustrated, and enforced, in such times, such a principle as that of NO RETALIATION.

All the accounts of him agree that, from his earliest childhood, he was distinguished by a tenderness of nature which would not let him hurt a fly. He attached to himself the cattle

and horses which were under his charge when a boy, to a degree which made him famous in a region where cruelty to animals at the hands of slaves was almost universal. A man who lived till fifty, remarkable for a singular gentleness and placability, ought not to be believed sanguinary from that time forward on the strength of the unsupported charges of his disappointed enemies.

Piety was also his undisputed early characteristic. A slave, bringing to the subject of religion the aptitude of the negro nature, early treated with kindness by a priest, evincing the spirit of piety from his infant years, finding in it the consolations required by a life of slavery, and guided by it in a course of the strictest domestic morality while surrounded by licentiousness, may well be supposed sincere in his religion under a change of circumstances occurring after he was fifty years of age. The imputation of hypocrisy is not, however, much to be wondered at when it is considered that, at the time when the first notices of Toussaint were written at Paris, it was the fashion there to believe that no wise man could be sincerely religious.

As for the charge of general and habitual dissimulation, it can only be said, that while no proof of the assertion is offered, there is evidence, in all the anecdotes preserved of him, of absolute frankness and simplicity. I rather think that it was the incredible extent of his simplicity which gave rise to the belief that it was assumed in order to hide cunning. The *Quarterly Review* quotes an anecdote thoroughly characteristic of the man, which is not introduced into my story because, in the abundance of my materials, I found it necessary to avoid altogether the history of the English transactions in St. Domingo. It was only by confining my narrative to the relations between Toussaint and France that I could keep my tale within limits and preserve the clearness of the representation. There are circumstances, however, in his intercourse with the British as honorable to Toussaint's character as any that I have related; and among them is the following, which I quote from the *Quarterly Review*:

"General Maitland, previous to the disembarkation of the troops, returned the visit at Toussaint's camp; and such was his confidence in the integrity of his character, that he proceeded through a considerable extent of country, full of armed negroes, with only three attendants. Roume, the French commissary, wrote a letter to Toussaint on this occasion, advising him to seize his guest as an act of duty to the Republic: on the route, General Maitland was secretly informed of Roume's treachery; but, in full reliance on the honor of Toussaint, he determined to proceed. On arriving at headquarters, he was desired to wait. It was some time before Toussaint made his appearance; at length, however, he entered the room with two open letters in his hand. 'There, general,' said he, 'before we talk together, read these. One is a letter from the French commissary, the other is my answer. I could not see you till I had written my reply, that you might be satisfied how safe you were with me, and how incapable

I am of baseness.'"—*Quarterly Review*, vol. xxi., p. 442.

The charge of personal ambition is, above all, contradicted by facts. If any thing is clear in Toussaint's history, it is that his ruin was owing to his loyalty to France, his misplaced trust in Napoleon, and his want of personal ambition. He did not, as he might have done, make himself a sovereign when France was wholly occupied with European warfare. He did not, as he might have done, prepare his people to resist the power of the mother-country when she should at length be at liberty to reclaim the colony. He sent away the French commissaries only when, by their ignorance and incompetency, they periled the peace and safety of the colony. He cherished the love of the mother-country in the hearts of the negroes to the very last moment—till the armament which came to re-establish slavery appeared on the shores—till it was too late to offer that resistance which would have made him a king. Christophe's view of this part of his conduct is given in a manifesto, dated in the eleventh year of the Independence of Hayti:

"Toussaint L'Ouverture, under his paternal administration, had reinstated, in full force, law, morals, religion, education, and industry. Agriculture and commerce were flourishing. He favored the white colonists, particularly the planters. Indeed, his attentions and partialities had been carried to such a length, that he was loudly blamed for entertaining more affection for them than for those of his own color. Nor was this reproach without foundation: for, a few months before the arrival of the French, he sacrificed his own nephew, General Moysse, who had disregarded the orders he had given for the protection of the colonists. That act of the governor, added to the great confidence he had placed in the French authorities, was the principal cause of the feeble resistance the French encountered in Hayti. Indeed, his confidence in these authorities was such, that he had discharged the greater part of the regular troops, and sent them back to the tillage of the soil."—*Haytian Papers*, p. 158.

Such conduct is a sufficient answer to the allegation that Toussaint was actuated by a selfish ambition, cunning in its aims, and cruel in its use of means.

Some light is thrown upon the character of his mind by the record of the books he studied while yet a slave. Rainsford gives a list, which does not pretend to be complete, but which is valuable as far as it goes. It appears that in his years of comparative leisure he was completely engrossed by one book at a time, reading it at all spare moments, meditating its contents while in the field, and quoting it in conversation for weeks together. One of the first authors whose works thus entirely possessed him was Raynal: afterward Epictetus, in a French translation: then others, as follows:

Scriptores de Re Militari.

Cæsar's Commentaries. French translation, by De Crisse.

Des Claison's History of Alexander and Cæsar. D'Orleans's History of Revolutions in England and Spain.

Marshal Saxe's Military Reveries.

Guisehard's Military Memoirs of the Greeks and Romans.

Herodotus.

Le Beau's Memoirs of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres.

Lloyd's Military and Political Memoirs.

English Socrates, Plutarch, Cornelius Nepos, etc., etc.

Great mystery hangs over the tale of Toussaint's imprisonment and death. It appears that he was confined in the Temple as long as

Napoleon had hopes of extorting from him information about the treasures, absurdly reported to have been buried by him in the *mornes*,* under circumstances of atrocious cruelty. It has been suggested that torture was employed by Bonaparte's aid, Caffarelli, to procure the desired confession; but I do not know that the conjecture is founded on any evidence.

As to the precise mode of L'Ouverture's death, there is no certainty. The only point on which all authorities agree is, that he was deliberately murdered; but whether by mere confinement in a cell whose floor was covered with water and the walls with ice (a confinement necessarily fatal to a negro), or by poison, or by starvation in conjunction with disease, may perhaps never be known. The report, which is, I believe, the most generally believed in France, is that which I have adopted: that the commandant, when his prisoner was extremely ill, left the fortress for two or three days, with the key of Toussaint's cell in his pocket; that, on his return, he found his prisoner dead; and that he summoned physicians from Pontarlier, who examined the body, and pronounced a serous apoplexy to be the cause of death. It so happened that I was able in the spring of last year to make some inquiry upon the spot, the result of which I will relate.

I was traveling in Switzerland with a party of friends, with whom I had one day discussed the fortunes and character of Toussaint. I had then no settled purpose of writing about him, but was strongly urged to it by my companions. On the morning of the 15th of May, when we were drawing near Payerne from Freyburgh, on our way to Lausanne, I remembered and mentioned that we were not very far from the fortress of Joux, where Toussaint's bones lay. My party were all eager that I should visit it. There were difficulties in the way of the scheme, the chief of which was, that our passports were not so signed as to enable us to enter France; and the nearest place where the necessary signature could be obtained was Berne, which we had left behind us the preceding day. I had, however, very fortunately, a secretary of state's passport, besides the Prussian consul's; and this second passport, made out for myself and a *femme de chambre*, had been signed by the French minister in London. One of my kind companions offered to cross the frontier with me as my *femme de chambre*, and to help me in obtaining access to the prison of Toussaint: an offer I was very thankful to accept. At Payerne we separated ourselves and a very small portion of luggage from our party, whom we promised to overtake at Lausanne in two or three days. We engaged for the trip a double *char-à-banc*, with two stout little horses, and a *brave homme* of a driver, as our courteous landlady at Payerne assured us. Passing through Yverden, we reached Orbe by five in the afternoon, and took up our quarters at the Guillaume Tell, full of expectation for the morrow.

On the 16th, we had breakfasted, and were beginning the ascent of the Jura before seven o'clock. The weather was fine, and we enjoyed a succession of interesting objects till we reached that which was the motive of our excursion. First we had that view of the Alps which, if it were possible, it would be equally useless to describe to any who have and any who have not stood on the eastern slope of the Jura on a clear day. Then we wound among the singular defiles of this mountain range till we reached the valley which is commanded by Jougne. Here we alighted, climbing the slope to the gate of the town, while the carriage was slowly dragged up the steep, winding road. Our appearance

* I believe the term "*morne*" is peculiar to St. Domingo. A *morne* is a valley, whose bounding hills are themselves backed by mountains.

obviously perplexed the two custom-house officers, who questioned us, and peeped into our one bag and our one book (the "Hand-book of Switzerland") with an amusing air of suspicion. My companion told that the aim of our journey was the fortress of Joux; and that we expected to pass the frontier again in the afternoon, on our return to Orbe. Whether they believed us, or, believing, thought us very foolish, is best known to themselves; but I suspect the latter, by their compliments on our cleverness on our return. At Jongne we supplied ourselves with provisions, and then proceeded through valleys, each narrower than the last, more dismal with pines, and more checkered with snow. The air of desolation, here and there rendered more striking by the dreary settlements of the charcoal-burners, would have been impressive enough if our minds had not been full of the great negro, and therefore disposed to view every thing with his eyes.

The scene was exactly what I have described in my story, except that a good road, made since Toussaint's time, now passes round and up the opposite side of the rock from that by which he mounted. The old road, narrow and steep, remains; and we descended by it.

We reached the court-yard without difficulty, passing the two draw-bridges and portcullis described. The commandant was absent; and his lieutenant declared against our seeing any thing more than the great wheel, and a small section of the battlements. But for great perseverance, we should have seen nothing more; but we obtained, at last, all we wanted. We passed through the vault and passages I have described, and thoroughly examined the cell. No words can convey a sense of its dreariness. I have exaggerated nothing; the dim light, the rotten floor, shining like a pond, the drip of water, the falling flakes of ice, were all there. The stove was removed, but we were shown where it stood.

There were only three persons who pretended to possess any information concerning the negro prisoner. The soldier who was our principal guide appeared never to have heard of him. A very old man in the village, to whom we were referred, could tell us nothing but one fact, which I knew before: that Toussaint was deprived of his servant some time before his death. A woman in the sutler's department of the fortress pretended to know all about him; but she had never seen him, and had no further title to authority than that her first husband had died in the St. Domingo invasion. She did us the good service of pointing out the grave, however. The brick-work which surrounds the coffin now forms part of a new wall; but it was till lately within the church.

This woman's story was that which was probably given out on the spot to be told to inquirers, so inconsistent is it in itself and with known facts. Her account was, that Toussaint was carried off from St. Domingo by the ship in which he was banqueted by Leclerc (the last of a line of two hundred) weighing anchor without his perceiving it while he was at dinner. The absurdity of this beginning shows how much reliance is to be placed upon the rest of her story. She declared that the Commandant Rubaut had orders from the Government to treat the prisoner well; that his servant remained with him to the last; that he was well supplied with books, allowed the range of the fortress, and accustomed to pass his days in the house of the commandant, playing cards in the evenings; that on the last day of his life he excused himself from the card-table on the plea of being unwell; that he refused to have his servant with him, though urged not to pass the night alone; that he was left with fire, fautenil, flambeaux, and a book, and found dead in his chair in the morning;

and that the physicians who examined the body declared his death to have been caused by the rupture of a blood-vessel in the heart. This last particular is known to be as incorrect as the first. As for the rest, this informant differs from all others in saying that Mars Plaisir remained with his master to the last day of his life; and we may ask why Toussaint's nights were to be passed in his horrible cell if his days were so favored; and how it was that no research availed to discover to the eager curiosity of all Europe and the West Indies the retreat of L'Ouverture, if he, a negro, was daily present to the eyes of the garrison of the fortress, and of those of all the inhabitants of the village, and of all the travelers on that road who chose to raise their eyes to the walls.

Our third informant was a boy, shrewd and communicative, who could tell us the traditions of the place; and, of course, young as he was, nothing more. It was he who showed us where the additional stove was placed when winter came on. He pointed to a spot beside the fireplace where he said the straw was spread on which Toussaint lay. He declared that Toussaint lived and died in solitude; and that he was found dead and cold, lying on the straw—his wood fire, however, not being wholly extinguished.

The dreary impression of the place saddened our minds for long after we had left it; and, glad as we were, on rejoining our party at Lausanne, to report the complete success of our enterprise, we can not recur to it, to this day, without painful feelings.

How the lot of Toussaint was regarded by the generous spirits of the time is shown in a sonnet of Wordsworth's, written during the disappearance of L'Ouverture. Every one knows this sonnet; but it may be read by others, as by me, with a fresh emotion of delight, after having dwelt on the particulars of the foregoing history.

"Toussaint, the most unhappy man of men!
Whether the whistling rustle tend his plow
Within thy hearing, or thy head be now
Pillow'd in some deep dungeon's earless den:
Oh miserable chieftain! where and when
Wilt thou find patience? Yet die not: do thou
Wear rather in thy bonds a cheerful brow:
Though fallen thyself, never to rise again,
Live and take comfort. Thou hast left behind
Powers that will work for thee: air, earth, and
skies.

There's not a breathing of the common wind
That will forget thee: thou hast great allies;
Thy friends are exultations, agonies,
And love, and man's unconquerable mind."

The family of Toussaint were first sent to Bayonne, and afterward to Agen, where one of the sons died of a decline. The two elder ones, endeavoring to escape from the surveillance under which they lived, were embarked for Belle Isle and imprisoned in the citadel, where they were seen in 1803. On the restoration of the Bourbons, not only were they released, but a pension was settled on the family. Madame L'Ouverture died, I believe, in the south of France, in 1816, in the arms of Placide and Isaac.

For some years I have read whatever came within my reach on the subject of my present work, so that it would not now be easy to assign my authority for every view and every statement it contains. The authorities which I have principally consulted while actually writing, I will, however, give. They are Rainsford's "Historical Account of the Black Empire of Hayti;" the above-mentioned article in the *Quarterly Review*; Bryan Edwards's "St. Domingo;" the article "Toussaint L'Ouverture" in the "Biogra-

phie Universelle;" and the "Haytian Papers," edited by Prince Sanders.

Of these, Bryan Edwards, who did not live to complete his history, barely names my hero; and the reports he gives of the Revolution of St. Domingo are useful chiefly as representing the prejudices as well as the interests of the planters. The article in the *Quarterly* is valuable as being an able and liberal digest of various narratives: some derived from Hayti itself. Rainsford's book is nearly unreadable from the absurdity of its style; but it is truly respectable in my eyes, notwithstanding, from its high appreciation of L'Ouverture's character. It contains more information concerning Toussaint than can be found, I believe, anywhere else, except in the "Biographie;" and it has the advantage of detailing what fell under the writer's own observation. The "Biographie" furnishes many valuable facts; but appears, from the inconsistency of various parts, and the confused impression which it conveys as a whole, to be a compilation, in which the workman has been more careful to give dates and other facts correctly, than to understand the personage whose portrait he professes to give. The "Haytian Papers" are the most valuable of all authorities as far as they go.

Of my personages, all had a real existence except M. Revel, Euphrosyne, and their servants, some of the planters mentioned in the second chapter, the children of Bellair, the abbess and her establishment, and some of the visitors at Toussaint's levée, with a few other subordinate characters.

Of the real personages, several were probably very unlike what I have represented them. I knew the names of some without knowing their characters, as in the instances of Placide and Isaac, MM. Pascal and Molière, Mars Plaisir, Madame Ogé, the Marquis d'Hermona, Laxabon, Vincent, and Paul.

Of others, I knew the character and history without being able to find the names, as in the instances of Madame Dessalines and Madame Bellair. Of others, such as the wife, daughters, and third son of Toussaint, M. Papaller, and the tutors Azna and Loisir, I knew only that they existed, without being able to learn their names or characters. The portraits which have some pretension to historical truth are those of Toussaint himself, Jean François, Christophe, Dessalines, and the other negro generals, old Dessalines, Bellair, Raymond, the French commissaries and envoys, Bayou, and Moysc.

Having mentioned in my tale the fine letters of Christophe relating to the intrigues of the French on their arrival, I have pleasure in giving the correspondence, as preserved in the "Haytian Papers."

LIBERTY AND EQUALITY.

ARMY OF ST. DOMINGO.

Head-quarters on board the *Océan*, }
13th Pluviöse, 10th year of the Republic. }

The General-in-chief of the Army of St. Domingo, Captain-general of the Colony, to the General of Brigade, Christophe, Commandant at Cap François.

I learn with indignation, citizen general, that you refuse to receive the French squadron and the French army that I command, under the pretext that you have received no orders from the governor-general.

France has concluded a peace with England,

and its government sends to St. Domingo forces capable of subduing the rebels; at least, if any are to be found in St. Domingo. As to you, general, I confess it will grieve me to account you among them.

I give you notice, that if you have not, in the course of this day, surrendered the forts Picolet and Belair, with all the batteries on the coast, to-morrow, at day-break, fifteen thousand troops shall be disembarked.

Four thousand men are at this moment landing at Fort Liberté; eight thousand more at Port Républicain.*

Herewith you will receive my proclamation, which expresses the intentions of the French Government: but recollect, whatever individual esteem your conduct may have inspired me with, I hold you responsible for what may happen.

I salute you,
(Signed)

LECLERC.

Head-quarters at Cap François, }
13th Pluviöse, year 10. }

Henri Christophe, General of Brigade, Commandant of the Arrondissement of Cap, to the General-in-chief, Leclerc.

Your aid-de-camp, general, has delivered to me your letter of this day. I have the honor to inform you that I could not deliver up the forts and post confided to my command without previous orders from the governor-general, Toussaint L'Ouverture, my immediate chief, from whom I hold the powers with which I am invested. I am fully persuaded that I have to do with Frenchmen, and that you are the chief of the armament called the expedition; but I wait the orders of the governor, to whom I have dispatched one of my aids-de-camp, to apprise him of your arrival and that of the French army, and can not permit you to land until I have received his answer. If you put in force your threats of hostility, I shall make the resistance which becomes a general officer; and, should the chance of war be yours, you shall not enter Cap François till it be reduced to ashes. Nay, even in the ruins will I renew the combat.

You say that the French Government has sent to St. Domingo forces capable of subduing the rebels, if any such be found; it is your coming, and the hostile intentions you manifest, that alone could create them among a peaceable people, in perfect submission to France. The very mention of rebellion is an argument for our resistance.

As to the troops which you say are this moment landing, I consider them as so many pieces of card, which the least breath of wind will dissipate.

How can you hold me responsible for the event? You are not my chief; I know you not, and can therefore make no account of you till you are recognized by Governor Toussaint.

For the loss of your esteem, general, I assure you that I desire not to earn it at the price that you set upon it, since to purchase it I must be guilty of a breach of duty.

I have the honor to salute you,

(Signed)

H. CHRISTOPHE.

* This is a remarkable instance of the tone of exaggeration in which Leclerc appears to have habitually indulged. He here pretends to have 27,000 men at his immediate disposal; whereas the histories of the time, written at Paris, give from 12,000 to 15,000 as the amount of the force Leclerc carried with him; and he was not re-enforced for several weeks after the date of this letter.

Head-quarters at Cap Français, }
29th Germinal, year 10 of the French Republic. }

The General-in-chief to General Christophe.

You may give credit, citizen general, to all that Citizen Vilton has written to you on behalf of General Hardy; I will keep the promises which have been made you; but if it is your intention to submit to the Republic, think on the essential service you could render her by furnishing the means to secure the person of General Toussaint.

(Signed) _____ LECLERC.

Head-quarters, Robillard, Grand Boucan, }
2d Floréal, year 10. }

The General of Brigade, Henri Christophe, to General Leclerc.

I have received yours of the 29th of last month. With earnest desire to give credit to what Citizen Vilton has written me, I wait only for a proof which must convince me of the intention to procure the liberty and equality of the population of this colony. The laws which consecrate the principles, and which the mother-country, without doubt, has enacted, will carry to my heart this conviction; and I protest, that, on obtaining this desired proof, by being made acquainted with these laws, I shall submit immediately.

You propose to me, citizen general, to furnish you with the means of securing the person of General Toussaint L'Ouverture. It would be perfidy and treason in me to do so; and a proposition so degrading to me is, in my opinion, a mark of your invincible repugnance to believe me susceptible of the smallest sentiment of delicacy and honor. He is my commander and my friend. Is friendship, citizen general, compatible with such monstrous baseness?

The laws which I have just mentioned have been promised us by the mother-country, by the proclamation that her consuls have addressed to us when they communicated the constitution of the 8th year. Fulfill, citizen general, fulfill this maternal promise, by unfolding to our view the code which contains it, and you will soon behold all her children rushing into the arms of that beneficent mother, and among them General Toussaint L'Ouverture, who, thus undeceived, like the rest, will hasten to correct his error. It is only when this error shall have been so dispelled, that, if he persist in spite of evidence, he can fairly be regarded as criminal, and be the first object of the anathema you have launched against him, and the measure you propose to me to execute.

Consider, citizen general, the happy effects that will result from the mere publication of these laws to a people crushed of old beneath the weight of burdens, and lacerated by the scourges of a barbarous slavery, in whom the apprehension of similar enormities is doubtless excusable: a people, in short, who have tasted the sweets of liberty and equality, and covet no happiness beyond the assurance of never more having to dread the fetters they have broken. The exposure of these laws before their eyes will stop the effusion of French blood by the hands of Frenchmen; will restore to the Republic children who may yet do her service; and, after the horrors of civil war, bring back tranquility, peace, and prosperity to the bosom of this unhappy colony. The object is, without question, worthy of the greatness of the mother-country: its attainment, citizen general, would cover you with glory, with the blessings of a people who will take pleasure in forgetting the evils that they have suffered by the delay of this promulgation. Reflect, that to refuse them

a participation of these laws, so necessary for the salvation of these countries, would be to perpetuate those evils, and must lead to absolute destruction. In the name of my country, in the name of the mother-country, I call for these salutary laws. Produce them, and St. Domingo is saved.

I have the honor to salute you,
(Signed) _____ H. CHRISTOPHE.

ARMY OF THE EXPEDITION.

Head-quarters at Cap Français, 4th Floréal, }
year 10 of the French Republic. }

The General-in-chief to General Christophe.

I have just received your letter, general. The uneasiness you testify to me is of a nature easy to be removed. You demand of me the code which gives assurance of liberty to the negroes. That code is not completed: I am at this moment engaged upon it. The wisdom of the First Consul did not allow him to make a code for the government of a country with which he was unacquainted, and of which the accounts he has received are contradictory. But I declare to you in the presence of the colony—I protest before the Supreme Being, whose assistance is never invoked in vain—that the bases of this code are liberty and equality; that the negroes shall be free; and that the system of cultivation shall be founded upon the basis of that of General Toussaint, which may, perhaps, be even ameliorated in their favor. If this declaration is insufficient, it will be to me a convincing proof that you have no wish to submit to the Republic. If it be sufficient, present yourself to-morrow at the village of Haut-du-Cap. I shall be there; and I declare to you, that if, after an hour's explanation, we do not come to an understanding, you shall be at liberty to return to your troops, upon the word of honor of the general-in-chief.

What I have said to you on the subject of General Toussaint arose from my not supposing him to be actuated by such loyal views as yourself. I shall take pleasure in finding myself deceived. The answer you have made on this head gave me great satisfaction, and confirms me in the opinion I have always had of your loyalty.

If you come, and we understand one another, the war will have lasted so much the shorter time in the colony. If not, calculate my means, and your chances of successful resistance.

I salute you,
(Signed) _____ LECLERC.

Let me know the result of your arrangements, for I intend to absent myself from Cap for some moments.

(Signed) _____ LECLERC.

LIBERTY AND EQUALITY.

Head-quarters, Cardineau, Grande Rivière, }
5th Floréal, year 10. }

The General of Brigade, Henri Christophe, to General Leclerc.

I this moment received your letter of yesterday: its contents revive in my mind the hope of seeing tranquillity, peace, and prosperity return to this too-long-agitated colony, under the auspices of liberty and equality. I accept your offer of an interview. To-morrow, at eleven o'clock in the morning, I shall present myself at Haut-du-Cap to confer with you. The word of a French general is, in my estimation, too sacred and inviolable to be denied belief.

I am flattered with the opinion you entertain of my loyalty, but regret that you still persist

in thinking General Toussaint uninspired by that estimable feeling. Give me leave to say that you are deceived with regard to him. I have no apprehension of finding myself deceived when I assure you that the confirmation of civilized liberty and equality will make him throw himself into the arms of the Republic.

It is hopeless to enter upon any calculation of our respective means; the resolution to be a man and a free man is the sum of my arithmetic; and the certainty of seeing this title insured to my fellow-citizens will soon resolve our divided forces into one and the same body, into one and the same family, united by the sincerest fraternity.

I have the honor, etc.,
(Signed) H. CHRISTOPHE.

Head-quarters at Cap Français, }
5th Floréal, year 10. }

The General-in-chief to the General of Brigade, Christophe, Commandant of the Cordon of the North.

I approve, citizen general, of the motives which prevent your presence at Cap to-day. I am the more gratified by your effecting this operation in person, because the execution of your orders experienced some difficulties at Limbé.

The Commandant Lafleur, who occupies the great Cut of Limbé, would not consent to surrender his post without having seen you. It appears that the same thing has taken place on the side of the landing-place of Limbé. General Salme had sent troops to occupy these posts; on the refusal to surrender them, the troops retired. Some mounted dragoons of the country, and some of the rustic militia, came to his camp to buy provisions; General Salme caused them to be disarmed and sent back. I have given orders for their arms to be restored.

As soon as you have completed the arrangements on the side of Grande Rivière, proceed to the cross-way of Limbé, where you will find General Salme, who commands the arrondissement de Plaisance, and all the country that lies beyond the Rivière Salée. Take measures in consulting with him, so that he may forthwith occupy the military posts at present in the charge of your troops, and give orders that the rustic militia retire immediately to their habitations. Put in requisition every possible means of conveyance, in order to facilitate the provisioning of the troops cantoned in the mountains.

I salute you,
(Signed) LECLERC.

As soon as you have concluded the business at Limbé, you will come and join me.
(Signed) LECLERC.

LIBERTY AND EQUALITY.

Head-quarters of Cap Français, 30th Germinal, }
year 10 of the French Republic. }

The General of Division, Hardy, commanding the Division of the North at St. Domingo, to General Christophe, commanding the Cordon of the North.

Captain Vilton, in command at the Petit Anse, has communicated to me, citizen general, the letter which you have written to him, and I imparted it immediately to the general-in-chief, Leclerc.

By the details into which you have entered with Citizen Vilton, it is easy to discover, general, that you have been the victim of the treacherous insinuations of an infinity of beings who, during the course of the revolution in France, have set all parties on fire together; have ev-

erywhere excited trouble and discord; and who, after having brought upon themselves their own expulsion, have taken refuge in this colony, where they have distorted every fact and circumstance; disseminated the most atrocious falsehoods and calumnies; and sought, in fresh troubles, an existence that they could no longer find in Europe.

These crafty men have inspired you with distrust of the French Government and its delegates. The conduct of the Government, and its good faith, are well known to the whole world. Our own behavior since our arrival in St. Domingo—our proceedings toward the peaceable inhabitants, and in the instances of Generals Clerveaux, Paul L'Ouverture, Maurepas, La Plume, and their companions in arms—may give you a just measure of all that malevolence and intrigue have invented to slander the purity of our intentions.

Twelve years, general, have we been fighting for liberty; can you believe that, after such great sacrifices, we would so degrade ourselves in our own eyes as to incur a blemish which would efface our glory and destroy our work? Return, general, to more reasonable sentiments, and assure yourself that your principles are ours also.

The reputation you enjoy in this country led us not to presume that the French, your brothers, would encounter any resistance in you to the will of the Government.

Nevertheless, general, all hope of obtaining from this same Government oblivion of the past is not entirely lost to you. I address you with the frankness of a soldier unacquainted with shifts and evasions. Correct your errors; your return to true principles may accelerate the reparation of evils which have afflicted this beautiful spot. It is unworthy of you to serve as a stepping-stone to a usurper—to a rebel. The mother-country throws wide her arms to all her children led astray, and invites them to take refuge in her bosom.

If you have a serious intention of recognizing the laws of the Republic and of submitting to the orders of her Government, you will not hesitate, general, to come and join us with your troops. Hitherto we have fought you as enemies; to-morrow, if you will, we will embrace you as brothers.

Write me your proposals, or inform me at what hour you will be at Vaudreuil to make them verbally. You will find me there. If we do not come to an understanding, I give you my word of honor, after the conference, you shall be at liberty to return to your head-quarters.

I have the honor to salute you,
(Signed) HARDY.

Head-quarters, Robillard, Grand Boucan, }
2d Floréal, year 10. }

The General of Brigade, Henri Christophe, to the General of Division, Hardy.

Your letter of the 30th Germinal has reached me. You are wrong in believing me the victim of the machinations of perfidious intrigues. Nature, without having endued me with all the subtlety of a penetrating and clear-sighted genius, has furnished me with sense enough to guard me from the insinuations of wicked men. With an ardent love of peace and tranquillity, I have always kept at a distance from me violent and turbulent men, whose poisoned breath engenders confusion and discord; but I have not been exempt from the suspicions that so many publications have roused in my mind, and which so many others have confirmed. Some originated in foreign countries, others in the

heart of France. All announced, with a menacing tone, the misfortunes which now afflict us. How happens it that the desires of the wicked and the predictions of the evil-minded appear so much in unison with the resolutions of the mother-country?

When we were thus threatened with the return of slavery after having broken its fetters, was any thing more natural than the dread of its return; than the suspicion, the restlessness, even the mistrust, of a people so often deceived, so constantly the mark for the declared hatred of the enemies of its liberty, who were jealous of the equality admitted in their favor? Could we be otherwise when every thing concurred to justify our fears?

General, we too have twelve years combated for liberty; for the same rights which, like yourselves, we bought at the price of our blood; and I have ever revolted at the belief that the French, after having made such sacrifices to obtain them, would one day come to tear them from a people who glory in being a part of the great nation, and in enjoying, in common with her, the advantages derived from the revolution. That revolution, and the benefits it has diffused, are worthy of the glory of the Republic; and when you assure me that she will not destroy her work, why refuse to this branch of her family what must infallibly consolidate and immortalize for her the sublime edifice? The code of laws promised to the inhabitants of the colonies by the proclamation of the consuls, which accompanied their communication of the constitution of the year 8, can alone convey to my mind the pledge of the consolidation of our rights. This, citizen general, is the only weapon capable of subduing the apprehensions of a justly-suspicious people! This, a convincing proof, which alone can restore in my mind these sentiments to which you would recall me, and assure me that our mutual principles are the same!

The candor with which you address me is worthy, in all respects, of a soldier like yourself; I express myself with equal frankness; and if General Leclere, instead of proposing to me an act of treason and infamy which would degrade me in my own eyes, had spoken to me as you have done—a language consistent with sentiments of honor and delicacy, such as he might fairly have presumed in me—I should have at least consented to the interview which you invite, not only at Vaudreuil, but at Le Petit Anse, or even at Cap. But, be it as it may, I augur too favorably of your frankness and your word of honor not to consent to that interview; not at the place you point out, but at one which may be near the centre of our respective lines. I therefore propose the house of Montalibor for this purpose. If that is agreeable to you, appoint the day and hour when you will meet me there, and I promise to be present. But, general, furnish yourself with the code of laws which are to govern this country—which confirm liberty and equality to the people who will water and fertilize it with their sweat—and our interview will be crowned with the happiest success; and I rejoice to owe to you the information which can alone dispel our error. Doubt not, general, that General Toussaint L'Ouverture himself, whom General Leclere considers but as a criminal, will then not hesitate to throw himself, with the whole nation, into the arms of the Republic; and, reunited under the auspices of these beneficent laws, this grateful people will offer him again, as a proof of their devotion, the exertions that they have once before directed to render this portion of the French Empire productive.

I have the honor, etc.,

(Signed)

H. CHRISTOPHE.

Petit Anse, 26th Germinal, year 10.

Vilton, Commandant of the Petit Anse,* to Citizen Henri Christophe, General of Brigade, at his Headquarters.

MY DEAR COMRADE,—I give way to the sentiments that my ancient friendship inspires for you; I have heard with the deepest regret of your refusal to submit to the will of the French general whom the First Consul has dispatched to St. Domingo, to complete, support, and consolidate the order that you had so effectually established at Cap, the dependency of the North, where you acquired the regard and affection of all the colonists. You repeatedly told me, my dear comrade, that your greatest pleasure would be to see the French arrive, and resign into their hands the authority with which you were invested; by what fatality can you so suddenly have changed your good intentions? By this step you have renounced personal happiness, the security of your fortune, and the splendid establishment you could have secured to your amiable family; you have plunged them, as well as yourself, into the most frightful misery. Your intentions have always, to me, appeared so pure, and your devotion to the French nation left me nothing to doubt in the conduct you proposed to pursue; when, in an instant, on the appearance of a French squadron, you were no longer the same man. All the world, and your friends in particular, were persuaded that you had been ill advised, and perhaps overruled, by some black chiefs who were about you. So many handsome things have been said about you to M. Leclere, the general-in-chief, that he is thoroughly convinced that it is owing to evil counsels that you took the resolution to resist; that he is ready to pardon you if you will reduce to obedience the troops that you command, and surrender the post that you occupy. This is a fine opening, my dear comrade, for yourself, as well as for the brave officers and soldiers under your command; they will be all treated in the same manner as the French army, and you will secure for yourself and your family every happiness that you can desire, especially if you should desire to quit the colony, which is the best course you can take to save yourself from being exposed to the hatred of the rebels to the orders of France who shall refuse to follow your example; you will be certain of a liberal fortune, and can enjoy it peaceably, under the protection of France, in the country of your choice. My dear comrade, my tender friendship for you and your family induces me to write this. I shall partake of your happiness if I can contribute to effect it. It lies with you to give me this gratification by following the advice of your old friend. Reply to me, and let me know your intentions, that I may bring them to bear in the way most agreeable to yourself.

Every one here, and in all parts of the colony, has witnessed the frankness and good faith of the French generals, and I have no reserve in repeating to you the assurance that you may place entire confidence in them; they will open to you every facility, assist you with every means in their power, and furnish you the convenience of carrying along with you every thing you possess, and enjoying it peaceably wherever you choose to reside. Trust me, then, my dear comrade; quit this wandering and vagabond life, which would dishonor you if you continue to follow it; and regain the esteem of all good cit-

* The two letters subjoined, under the signature of the Sieur Vilton, were fabricated by the Sieur Anquetil, who wrote them, with his own hand, at the house of the Sieur Blin de Villeneuve, one of the great planters of the northern district, grandfather to the Sieur Vilton, who had no hand in them but the signature, to which he was forced by the French Government.

izens by being yourself again, and abandoning the cause of an ambitious man, who will be your ruin in the end. Pay no regard to your outlawry; the general-in-chief, Leclere, has said that it should not have taken place had he known you sooner, and that the proclamation should be annulled as soon as he hears that you have acknowledged your error and abandoned the cause of rebellion.

Health and Friendship.

(Signed)

VILTON.

Head-quarters, Hamlet of Dondon, }
20th Germinal, year 10. }

The General of Brigade, Henri Christophe, to the Commandant Vilton.

I love to give credit to the expression of your long-standing friendship for me, which has inspired you with the idea of addressing to me your letter of the 26th of this month. The sentiments of friendship I have avowed to you remain unalterable; you know me too well to doubt it.

Should I even have refused to submit to the orders of the French general, sent to this island by the First Consul of the Republic, if every thing had not conspired to convince me that the meditated consolidation of the good order which reigned in this colony was nothing less than the destruction of our liberty and the rights resulting from equality? It is true, as you say, I have declared my greatest desire was to see the French arrive, and to deposit in their hands the share of authority with which I was invested, and enjoy, as a simple citizen, the benefits of liberty and equality in the bosom of my family, in the midst of my fellow-citizens, provided that they too partook with myself of these sacred rights. A Frenchman, loving and respecting France, I joyfully entertained this hope: a hope that my confidence in the Government of the mother-country fostered and confirmed from day to day. I have never changed my inclinations in this respect; but by what fatality is it that this hope has been deceived—that all has concurred to prove that the principles previously adopted in our favor have been changed? St. Domingo, wholly French, enjoyed, as you know, the profoundest tranquillity; there were no rebels to be found: by what fatal blindness, then, does it happen that France has come with all the terrors of war and the artillery of destruction? Not to subdue the rebels (for rebels there were none), but to create them among a peaceful people, and furnish a pretext to destroy or enslave them.

You say I have renounced my happiness. Alas! what happiness, what fortune, what splendid establishment of myself and my family could ever have offered me consolation for the grief of seeing my fellows reduced to the last degree of misfortune under the burden of slavery? My intentions have always been pure, and you were, more than any body, acquainted with my devotion to the French nation. My intentions, my sentiments have never wearied. I have always been the same man. But, placed as I was by my fellow-citizens, as a sentinel at the post where it was my duty to watch over the preservation of liberty, more dear to them than their existence, how could I do otherwise than alarm them at the approach of the blow aimed at its annihilation?

How many letters, pouring in upon us in shiploads from France and foreign countries, written in a menacing tone by colonists to other colonists, who preached forth their contents with undisguised and seditious vehemence, announced to me, in the most explicit terms, the

fatte reserved for the people of this colony and its defenders!

You know it. I have communicated to several. Did I not, from motives of prudence, conceal them from the governor, for fear of agitating him; and did not my confidence in the government of the Republic so master my common sense as to make me, to the last moment, consider these letters as the mere expressions of the hatred of some wretches, who sought, in pure despite, again to embroil this country? Yet has not the event, notwithstanding my credulity, fully justified all their annunciations? The world—above all, my friends, most especially deceive themselves if they believe that I have allowed myself to be led away by any chiefs that are about me. At my age I have no need of counsel; it is my duty that is my counselor upon all occasions. You ought to know me better, and to be aware that I never took advice of my friends, not even of you, whom I distinguished among them. Friends, alas! I thought I could count many; but now, like Diogenes, with a lantern in my hand at noonday, I search in vain for one on whom I can rely.

It is, without doubt, very flattering to have so much good said of me to M. Leclere, the general-in-chief; but he is wrong in persuading himself that my present conduct is the result of evil counsel. What I have said to you on that head is a complete answer to that opinion. I never had any intention of resisting him, and so I wrote word when he first appeared before Cap François; I testified to him how much regret I should feel if compelled to oppose reluctant resistance before receiving the orders of the chief who had placed me at this post, and who had intrusted me with a charge which I could resign into no other hands. I sent to him Citizen Granier, commander of a battalion of the National Guard, as the bearer of my letter, and charged him to express verbally the necessity I was under of waiting the orders I expected from the governor, and my resolution, when he should have been apprised of the squadron's arrival, to fulfill the obligation of receiving it with all the respect due to the mother-country; in case the governor, after being certified that it was from France, should meditate resistance. Without attending to this reasonable observation, General Leclere sends back Citizen Granier without any other answer than this: "*That he had orders to use force, and would execute them.*" A trifling delay would have prevented much calamity. As a man of honor, I was determined to observe religiously what I had charged the Citizen Granier to represent on my behalf to General Leclere: but this general did not condescend to give it credit; and, notwithstanding the protestations he received of my devotion to France, the port-captain whom I had sent to meet the squadron is still detained, and his aid-de-camp forewarns me that, if I send my adjutant-general, he will be similarly treated. At the same time, General Rochambeau effects a landing near Fort Liberté without giving notice to the commander of that place, marches upon the forts which defend it, makes himself master of them, and puts to the sword the brave men he finds there; while the vessels enter the harbor, and discharge their guns upon the town. On the other hand, another landing is made at Limbé, which is likewise cannonaded; and Cap François is placed between two numerous armies, with a menacing squadron in front. The terms of the letter which General Leclere had addressed to me, showed plainly enough the object he had in view. I take counsel of the emergency of the circumstance in which I was placed by the conduct of this general; I take counsel, I say, of his own behavior; and thus commence all the evils that afflict us.

After acting in such a manner, what must I not suspect? Had I not reason to presume unfavorably, from the measures just put in execution against me? Yes, I avow it; however great had been, at all times, my confidence in the French Government, I felt it powerfully shaken by the thundering threats, by the blows aimed at us; and the conduct of the chiefs of the French army determined mine.

You speak to me of fortune: I have no longer any. I have lost all. Honor is henceforth the only possession which is left to me and to my family. You know me; and you know whether it is or is not the object of my ambition.

You counsel me to make bold to ask leave to quit the colony. You can not be ignorant that I am not deficient in courage, and in this case it would not fail me. I had resolved long since to quit the colony on the restoration of peace, and Citizen Granier was half inclined to the same course. If he exists, he can testify to the truth of this assertion. My attachment to France had made me choose her bosom as the asylum whither we might, with our exiled families, have retired, and passed our days in peace, in the sweet certainty of leaving all our brethren free and happy on the soil of this colony. Why has every thing concurred to frustrate this hope? I expect to receive every day the blow that will annihilate me; and Citizen Granier, who, I learn, is detained on board, has perhaps already ceased to exist. What is his crime? What harm has he done? Is it possible that his friendship for me has been his crime?

You take upon yourself, my dear comrade, to give me proofs of good faith and frankness on the part of the French generals; you know not how it grieves me to be unable to remove the just suspicions with which all the facts I have detailed have inspired me; facts against which I can find no reasonable or prudent pretext for shutting my eyes. Happen what may, honor is my guide; and it is with extreme repugnance that I impute to any other rule of conduct the actions and promises of others—honor has always appeared to me so dear to French officers.

I always cherish the esteem of good citizens. If there exist at St. Domingo any ambitious men, who covet nothing but honor, preferment, or distinction—as for me, my ambition always consisted in meriting the honorable consideration of good men; in seeing my fellow-citizens happy; in enjoying, in common with them, the sole title of free man, the sole rights of equality, in the bosom of my tranquil family, and in the circle of a few estimable friends.

You advise me, my dear comrade, to pay no regard to my outlawry. General Leclerc, you tell me, has said it should not have taken place had he known me sooner, and that the proclamation should be annulled as soon as I should have retracted my error. I am ready to retract; but my doubts must be removed, my suspicions cleared up. There is no sacrifice that I will not make for the peace and happiness of my fellow-citizens, if I am but convinced that they shall all be free and happy. I have but one thing left to sacrifice—my life. All the rest I have already given. Produce the proofs necessary for my conviction, and with a willing heart I offer the sacrifice, if, after demonstration of my error, it can make atonement, and restore tranquillity and prosperity to my country and to my fellow-citizens.

I salute you with friendship,
(Signed) H. CHRISTOPHE.

Petit Anse, 30th Germinal, year 10.

Vilton, Commandant at Petit Anse, to Citizen Henri Christophe, General of Brigade, commanding the Cordon of the North.

MY DEAR COMRADE,—I can with difficulty express the pleasure that your answer to my letter affords me, since it gives me the hope of seeing you once more actuated by that confidence which you should never have ceased to place in the justice and generosity of the representative of France in this colony; these are the characteristics of French officers, and, above all, of the general-in-chief, Leclerc; and it was the intimate knowledge of these qualities that induced the First Consul to make choice of him as the bearer of happiness and peace to this unfortunate colony. Your submission to a chief of such merit will gain you a protector, who will charge himself with the office of making such provision for you as will lead you to bless the day of your compliance with the counsel I have now given, and which I now repeat more strongly than ever. I made it my first business to communicate your letter to him, as well as to General Hardy. The expressions you make use of have met with their approbation. The distrust you discover in some paragraphs alone prevents them from being completely satisfied. The general-in-chief himself is going to write to you. I can not press you too strongly to place entire confidence in his promises, as well as in the honor of General Hardy; and I doubt not you will find in their letters every thing that you, as well as your fellow-citizens, ought in reason to require for your satisfaction.

With respect to your friend Granier, if he is detained, it is not because of his connections, but because he has many enemies here, who have calumniated him. I have no doubt that, as soon as Government shall have had time to investigate his affair, he will be set at liberty.

Adieu, my dear comrade: depend upon the friendship I have sworn to you for life.

Health and Friendship.

(Signed)

VILTON.

Head-quarters, Roubillard, Grand Boucan, }
2d Floréal, year 10.

The General of Brigade, Henri Christophe, commanding the Cordon of the North, to Vilton, Commandant at Petit Anse.

I again receive with pleasure, in your letter of the 30th ult., the expression of your friendship for me. The successful issue of your correspondence, which you seem to hope, depends upon General Leclerc. He has, indeed, addressed to me a letter; but I have read it in, with disgust, the proposition it contains, of dishonoring myself by an act of monstrous cowardice and perfidy.

I do trust, however, that in the character which has been given him of me, if dictated by truth, it has not been represented that such actions were familiar to me, and that I was wholly divested of every sentiment of delicacy and honor.

I replied to his letter in the same manner as I did to that of General Hardy, which appeared to be written in that style of frankness which ought to distinguish a soldier.

I have every desire to abjure the distrust which I have conceived. I demand of those two generals no more than what is necessary to renounce it; that is, in fact, the code of laws which was promised us by the proclamation addressed to us by the consuls of the Republic when they communicated the constitution of the year 8. In such a code only can lie the

proof of the intention to maintain and consolidate liberty and equality. If these laws are in your possession, impart them to me; if they exist, and you have them not, endeavor to obtain and produce them to me. To them I look for the restoration of tranquillity to this country—for the cement of union between the French of both worlds—for a stop to the effusion of their blood—for the reconciliation with the Republic of her children, who never willingly renounced her—and for the re-establishment in this island of peace and its blessings, in lieu of civil war and its ravages. Openly proclaim this code, and let the light of truth shine on those who may be blinded with error: then will you enjoy the satisfaction of having contributed to the happiness of our country, to that of our fellow-citizens, to my own among the rest; for, whatever lot may await me, my happiness will consist in that of my brethren, were it even sealed with my blood.

The unfortunate Granier is detained, and, without doubt, you tell me, on account of some calumnious insinuations of his enemies. Ought such a detention to have taken place without evidence? And is it consistent with a just and impartial government to suffer such long delays in the production of the proofs requisite for just condemnation or equitable acquittal? But, placed as I am, does it become me to plead the cause of friendship?

My dear comrade, do not forget those laws about which I have been speaking to you. Communicate them to me without delay, and you will soon attain the object you seem to aim at in your correspondence.

I salute you in friendship.

(Signed) HENRI CHRISTOPHE.
—*Haitian Papers*, p. 4-54.

These are the letters of the man whom, when he was King of Hayti, the French declared (in allusion to his employment while a slave) to be more fit to wield the frying-pan than the sceptre.

As in these letters Henri's French correspondent boasts of the excellent treatment the negro generals—and among them Maurepas—received from the invaders, it is right to complete the story by showing what were ultimately the tender mercies of the same parties. Christophe's Manifesto of September, 1814, tells the following tale, which is fully confirmed by Lacroix:

"Maurepas, a man of mild and gentle manners, esteemed for his integrity by his fellow-citizens, was one of the first to surrender to the French, and had rendered them signal services; yet this man was suddenly carried off to Port Paix, and put on board the admiral's vessel, then riding at anchor in Cap Roads, where, after binding him to the main-mast, they, in derision, fixed, with nails such as are used in ship-building, two old epaulettes on his shoulders, and an old general's hat on his head. In that frightful condition, these cannibals, after having glutted their savage mirth and exultation, precipitated him, with his wife and children, into the sea. Such was the fate of that virtuous and unfortunate soldier."—*Haitian Papers*, p. 170.

The crime which was visited by this atrocious punishment was one which the invaders never, in any instance, forgave—attachment to L'Ouverture. Maurepas acted weakly, in the first instance, in joining the French. On the abduction of Toussaint, he repented, as did all the negroes who had tolerated the invaders. He took up arms in defense of the liberties of the blacks, and died as we have seen. Rainsford tells what happened after the departure of Toussaint, and the consequent vigorous action of Christophe and Dessalines.

"A number of new generals had arisen in arms from the interior of the island, who began to

make excursions from the mountains. Among these was a powerful chief of negroes, of the Congo tribe, called Sans Souci, who, after committing considerable depredations, could never be discovered. Charles Bellair, with his Amazonian wife, also made a powerful diversion for a while, till they were both taken, and died under the most inconceivable tortures. Clerveaux, whose submission of the eastern part of the island had been formerly boasted without grounds,* now declared openly his contumacy; and Maurepas, who had surrendered, was detected in a conspiracy and put to death. Nor were the defections from the French army confined to the blacks, or to inferior officers among the whites. General Dugua, the chief of the French staff, disgusted with the horrors attendant on the war, and more particularly with the horrid punishment of Bellair and his wife, whom he had tried, was discovered in making arrangements to quit the French army, and took the resolution of destroying himself."—*Rainsford's "Historical Account,"* etc., p. 325.

The horrors perpetrated by the mortified and exasperated French now become too disgusting for the eye and ear; but they should not be disregarded when complaints are made of the ferocity of Dessalines, and when we attempt to appreciate the mildness of the rule of Christophe. Suffice it now that Leclerc died on Tortuga, on the 1st of November, 1802, and was succeeded in the command by Rochambeau; that, during the next year, the island was afflicted, from end to end, with the miseries of a most barbarous warfare; that the French lost ground perpetually, and died by thousands of disease and famine—the blood-hounds they had brought from Cuba serving them at length for food; that the invaders evacuated the island in November, 1803; and that their retreat was followed by a declaration, on the part of the generals Dessalines, Christophe, and Clerveaux, of the INDEPENDENCE OF HAYTI. We give the official announcements of the last event from Rainsford (p. 439-441).

Declaration of the Independence of the Blacks of St. Domingo.

PROCLAMATION OF DESSALINES, CHRISTOPHE, AND CLERVEAUX, CHIEFS OF ST. DOMINGO.

The Independence of St. Domingo is proclaimed. Restored to our primitive dignity, we have asserted our rights; we swear never to yield them to any power on earth. The frightful veil of prejudice is torn to pieces. Be it so forever! Woe be to them who would dare to put together its bloody tatters!

Land-holders of St. Domingo, wandering in foreign countries! by proclaiming our independence, we do not forbid you all, without distinction, to return to your property. Far be from us so unjust a thought! We are not ignorant that there are some among you who have renounced their former errors, abjured the injustice of their exorbitant pretensions, and acknowledged the lawfulness of the cause for which we have been spilling our blood these twelve years. Toward those men who do us justice we will act as brothers. Let them rely forever on our esteem and friendship; let them return among us. The God who protects us, the God of freemen, bids us stretch out toward them our conquering arms. But as for those who, intoxicated with foolish pride, interested slaves of a guilty pretension, are blinded so much as to believe themselves the essence of human nature,

* There is no more doubt of the original defection of Clerveaux than of its being afterward repented of.

and assert that they are destined by Heaven to be our masters and our tyrants, let them never come near the land of St. Domingo! If they come hither, they will only meet with chains or banishment. Then let them stay where they are. Tormented by their well-deserved misery, and the frowns of the just men whom they have too long mocked, let them still continue to live unpitied and unnoticed by all.

We have sworn not to listen with clemency to any who would dare to speak to us of slavery. We will be inexorable, perhaps even cruel, toward all troops who, themselves forgetting the object for which they have not ceased fighting since 1780, should come from Europe to bring among us death and servitude. No sacrifice is too costly, and all means are lawful, to men, from whom it is wished to wrest the first of all blessings. Were they to cause streams and torrents of blood to flow; were they, in order to maintain their liberty, to fire seven-eighths of the globe, they are innocent before the tribunal of Providence, which never created men to groan under so harsh and shameful a servitude.

In the various commotions that have taken place, some inhabitants against whom we had no complaints have been victims of the cruelty of a few soldiers or cultivators, too much blinded by the remembrance of their past sufferings

to be able to distinguish the good and humane land-owners from those who were unfeeling and cruel. We lament, together with all who feel, so deplorable an end; and declare to the world, whatever may be said to the contrary by wicked people, that the murders were committed contrary to the wishes of our hearts. It was impossible, especially in the crisis in which the colony was, to prevent or stop those horrors. They who are in the least acquainted with history, know that a people, when torn by civil dissensions, though they may be the most civilized on earth, give themselves up to every species of excess; and the authority of the chiefs, not yet firmly based, in a time of revolution can not punish all that are guilty without meeting with perpetual difficulties. But to-day the dawn of peace cheers us with glimpses of a less stormy time: now that the calm of victory has succeeded to the tumult of a dreadful war, all affairs in St. Domingo ought to assume a new face, and its government henceforward be one of justice.

Done at Head-quarters, Fort Dauphin, November 29, 1803.

(Signed)

DESSALINES.
CHRISTOPHE.
CLERVEAUX.

(True Copy)

B. AIMÉ, *Secretary*.

THE END.



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4124
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Black, William
The strange adventures
of a phaeton

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